ENGLISH HISTORY FROM CONTEMPORARY WRITERS

The Misrule of Henry III

1236–1251

EDITED BY

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ENGLISH HISTORY
BY CONTEMPORARY WRITERS

The Misrule of Henry iij

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THE series, of which the present volume is one, aims at setting forth the facts of our National History, political and social, in a way not yet systematically tried in this country, but somewhat like that which Messrs. Hachette have successfully wrought out in France under the editorship of MM. Zeller, Darsy, Luchaire, etc. It is planned not only for educational use but for the general reader, and especially for all those to whom the original contemporary authorities are for various reasons difficult of access.

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The chief aim of the series is to send the reader to the best original authorities, and so to bring him as close as may be to the mind and feelings of the times he is reading about.

No definite chronological system of issue is adopted, but it is hoped that the entire period of Mediæval and Renaissance history may be covered in the space of two or three years

F. YORK POWELL,

Editor of the Series.

Ch. Ch., Oxford, 1887.

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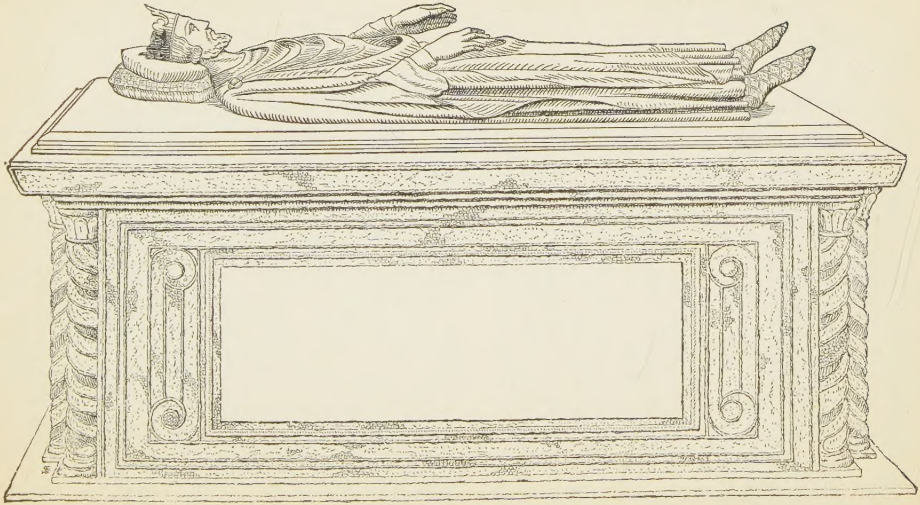

HENRY III.'S TOMB IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

ENGLISH HISTORY BY CONTEMPORARY WRITERS

The Misrule of Henry iij

Extracts from the writings of Matthew Paris, Robert Grosseteste, Adam of Marsh, etc., etc.

SELECTED AND ARRANGED BY

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PREFACE.

The reign of Henry III., a reign which witnessed a jubilee so unlike that of our own time, is too long for treatment in a single volume of this size. I have, therefore, thought it best to confine my work within the years which show the growth of opposition to royal misgovernment and papal interference, and the working out of that opposition in rebellion, and revision of the constitution, that is to the years 1235-1266. The Marriage of Henry III. forms a convenient opening, for the foreign influences it introduced were responsible for much of the subsequent disturbance. And the Ban of Kenilworth is a fit ending, for it marks the close of that struggle of which Simon of Montfort was the popular hero.

The present volume is concerned with the time when the general discontent found a voice, but no recognised leader, to unite all opponents of tyranny and on their behalf to demand redress. S. Edmund of Abingdon sank under the burden of the wrongs which he was powerless to avert. Even bishop Robert Grosseteste, who in many ways is the typical

figure of the time, failed to win universal support. He protested vigorously, but he accomplished little.

The extracts have been chosen with the view of throwing light on the causes which made different classes ready to welcome earl Simon as a deliverer. It is well to notice that while ecclesiastical grievances and royal extortion are present from the first, the effects of foreign entanglements only gradually come to the surface, through the Gascon troubles and the popes' endeavours to drag England into their own quarrel with the emperor. Not less interesting is it to observe that it is long before Simon is anything to the people but an alien and one of the king's greedy family, while the chroniclers hardly give us the means of deciding with any certainty on the reasons which made him eventually the champion of popular rights. Already, in 1252, he had joined himself to Grosseteste in his great aims of reformation. It will be the purpose of a succeeding volume to trace the struggle to its end.

I must express my great indebtedness to Mr. Charles Lethbridge Kingsford, B.A., formerly Scholar of S. John's College, who has given me much valuable assistance in all that concerns Matthew Paris.

W. H. HUTTON.

S. John's College, Oxford,
April, 1886.

The Misrule of Henry iij.

Jan. 20, 1236.—The ceremonies at the marriage of Henry III.

Matt. Paris, vol. iii., pp. 336-339. Rolls Series, ed. Luard.

(Henry married Eleanor, daughter of Raymond IV. Count of Provence, sister of Margaret wife of Louis IX. of France. This royal feast was the most splendid since Richard I.'s coronation, 1189.)

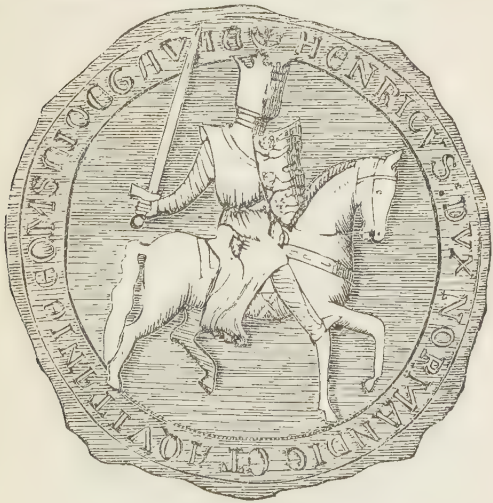
Arms of Provence (Westminster Abbey).

There were assembled at the nuptial banquet such a host of nobility of both sexes, so many of the clergy, such crowds of the people, and such a variety of actors, that London with its capacious bosom could scarcely contain them. The whole city was therefore decorated with flags and banners, wreaths and hangings, candles and lamps, and with certain wonderful devices and extraordinary displays; all the streets were cleared of mud, dirt, sticks, and everything offensive. The citizens of London went out to

meet the king and queen in holiday attire and trappings, and vied with one another in trying the speed of their horses.

On the same day when they set out from the city for Westminster, to perform the duties of butler to the king at the coronation, an office which belongs to them by ancient right, they proceeded thither dressed in silk garments, and with mantles of cloth of gold, and handsome tippets; they were mounted on costly steeds, which were ablaze with new bits and saddles, and were arranged in troops in order. They carried 360 cups of gold or silver, and the royal trumpeters went in front of them sounding their trumpets; so remarkable a novelty struck all who beheld it with astonishment. The archbishop of Canterbury, in virtue of his peculiar right, performed the coronation with the usual ceremonies, the bishop of London assisting as dean, the other bishops taking their stations according to rank; so also did all the abbats, at the head of whom, as was his right, was the abbat of S. Alban's. For as the blessed Alban, the protomartyr of England, is chief martyr of England, so also his abbat is first among all the abbats of England in rank and dignity, as the authentic privileges of that church bear witness. The nobles performed the duties which by ancient custom and right belonged to them at the royal coronations. So also the inhabitants of certain cities performed the duties which pertained to them by right of their ancestors. The earl of Chester carried the sword of S. Edward, which

is called *Curtein* * before the king, in token that he was count Palatine, and had by right the power of restraining the king if he should commit an error; his own constable of Chester attended him and kept the people back with a wand when they pressed forward unduly. The grand marshal of England, the earl of Pembroke, carried a wand before the king and



GREAT SEAL OF HENRY III.

cleared the way before him both in the church and in the banquet hall, and at table marshalled the

* This sword has a rounded point and is shorter than other swords. It is called *Curtana*, or *the short*, from the sword of Ogier, Charles the Great's paladin, which sword, having been broken in a trial of its temper, was so named.

royal banquet and guests. The wardens of the Cinque Ports carried a canopy above the king on four spears, this duty, however, was not altogether undisputed. The earl of Leicester supplied the king with water in a basin to wash before dining. The earl of Warrenne filled the post of royal cupbearer in place of the earl of Arundel, who was only a youth and not yet a belted knight. Master Michael Belet was butler *ex-officio;*

Great Seal of Henry III.

the earl of Hereford had the office of marshal of the royal household, and William Beauchamp acted as almoner. The Justiciar of the Forests arranged the dishes on the king's right hand at table, although

he at first met with some opposition, which, however, fell to the ground. The citizens of London passed the wine about in all directions, in costly cups; and those of Winchester superintended the cooking of the feast; the rest, according to the ancient statutes, filled their separate stations or made their claims to do so. And in order that the marriage festivities might not be clouded by any disputes, saving the right of any one, many things were put up with for the time, which would have to be decided on a fitting occasion. The office of chancellor of England and all the offices connected with the king, are appointed to and located in the exchequer. Therefore the chancellor, the chamberlain, the marshal, and the constable took their seats there, as also did the barons, according to the date of their creation, in the city of London, whereby each of them is there allotted his own place. The whole ceremony was magnificent and notably adorned by the clergy and knights who were present. The abbat of Westminster sprinkled the holy water, and the Treasurer, acting as subdeacon, carried the dish. Why should I give the list of all those who reverently ministered in the church to God as was their duty? Why describe the superabundance of meats and various drinks that were on the table? the quantity of venison, the variety of fish, the wit of the jesters, the grace of those that served? Everything pleasant and magnificent which distant lands can produce was there displayed.

Grosseteste's reforms in his diocese.

Grosseteste, Ep. 107.

(Grosseteste was elected Bishop of Lincoln in 1235 and at once set about a reform of his diocese. This seems to be his earliest pastoral.)

A Circular to his Archdeacons.

We have heard from trustworthy authority that many priests of your archdeaconry, fearing not God nor regarding men, either do not say the canonical hours or say them in a mutilated fashion, and that which they do say they say without any devotion or sign of devotion, rather with evident show of an undevout mind; nor in saying them do they keep an hour which may be more convenient to the parishioners for hearing the divine offices, but which may suit more with their own desires. Moreover they have concubines—a fact which though it escaped us and ours when we made inquisition thereon, and these persons of whom the enquiry was made did not fear perjury, yet ought not to escape you who are bound either yourselves or by the rural deans or officers continually to keep watch over them. For the clergy, as we hear, make plays which they call Miracles, and other plays which they call the Bringing in of May, or of Autumn,* and the laity Scotales, which could by no means escape you if your prudence

* These plays, of which our modern May-day Garlands and Guys are the last remnants, are fully illustrated in *Grimm's Mythology*, trans. by *Stallybrass*, p. 762-788. The Summer game took place at *Mid-lent*, or Lætare Sunday (usually in March), and there were May-day games.

diligently enquired thereof. There are also certain rectors and vicars and priests who not only scorn to hear the sermons of friars of either order, but also, as

Bishop (13th Century) from Window, Salisbury Cathedral.

far as they can, maliciously hinder the people from hearing their sermons or confessing to them; they

also admit to preach those who make a trade of it, who only preach such things as may the better extract money; whereas we license no such trader to preach. . . . . Wherefore we warn you in the Lord, we exhort, and strongly enjoin you that ye gird up your loins like men to purge away these and the like things, fighting the battles of the Lord boldly, and reducing the aforesaid inordinate deeds and the like to order, by compelling priests to perform the divine offices as they ought, to expel their concubines, to effectually lead the people to devoutly and attentively hear the sermons of the friars of both orders and to confess to them; not to admit hirelings to preach; moreover you shall, as you easily may, utterly suppress the miracles, and the aforesaid plays, and scotales; and you shall, as far as you are able, study to prevent the dwelling of Christians with Jews.

1235. -The usury of the men of Cahors.

Matthew Paris, vol. iii., pp. 328-331.

(Till the 13th century money lending in England was wholly in the hands of the Jews; but at this time Christian bankers from Cahors and from Lombardy were beginning to compete with them.)

At this time the detestable nuisance of the Caursines* prevailed to such an extent that there was scarcely anyone in all England, especially among the bishops, who was not already ensnared in their

* The Caursines were banished in 1240.—*Matthew Paris*, vol. iv., p. 8.

meshes. The king himself was under bond to them for an enormous sum. For they defrauded the needy in their necessities, cloaking their usury under the pretence of trade, and professing not to know that all which is added to the principal is usury, whatever the name by which it is called. It is evident that their loans lie outside the path of charity, since they do not stretch out a helping hand to the poor to relieve them but to deceive them; not to aid others in their want but to gratify their own covetousness, seeing that "the motive stamps our every deed." † . . . . . If I may make a play on the word, they were rightly called Caursines, as it were, causantes (quibblers), or capientes (takers), and ursini (bearish). At first they used to entice the poor with soft and honeyed speeches, but in the end wounded them as with a spear; for which reason, because their bills are subtle and extracted from the law books, and of a kin with the tricks of the pleaders, many men consider that these things were not done without the connivance of the court of Rome, recollecting the words of the Gospel, "The children of this world are, in their generation, wiser than the children of light." ‡ The Jews also finding a new kind of usury among Christians scoff at our Sabbaths with some reason.

† Quicquid agant homines intentio judicet omnes.

‡ S. Luke xvi. 8.

The work of the Franciscans.

Grosseteste. Ep. 58, to Pope Gregory IX. in praise of the Franciscans. (Extract.)

(The friars minor of the order of S. Francis of Assisi first landed in England on Sept. 10, 1224, and devoted themselves to missionary work, chiefly among the poor and lepers.)

Your holiness may know of a surety that inestimable service hath been done in my diocese by the aforesaid brethren. For they enlighten our whole land with the bright light of preaching and doctrine. Their holy conversation vehemently inciteth to contempt of the world and voluntary poverty, to maintaining humility even in dignity and power, to paying all obedience to prelates and the head of the Church, to patience in tribulation, to abstinence in abundance, and, in one word, to every good work. O that your holiness could see how devoutly and humbly the people run to hear the word of life, to confess their sins, to be instructed in the rules for daily life, how much profit the clergy and the monks take from the imitation of them, you would immediately declare that to them that dwell in the valley of the shadow of death hath the light shined. Let the zeal of your holiness therefore provide lest by the extinguishing or darkening of such a light—which may the True Light avert—the ancient darkness of error and sin, now to a great extent dispersed, should overspread and enwrap that land which He especially loveth,

Ordinances of Grosseteste's Household.

Monumenta Franciscana, Rolls Series, p. 582.

(This, says Mr. Brewer, is evidently a letter addressed to the bishop by an intimate friend. Adam of Marsh may very probably have been the writer. The MS. from which it is printed appears to be a 15th century translation of the Latin original.)

Let all men be warned that serve you and warning be given to all men that be of [your] household to serve God and you truly and diligently. . . . . .

1. First let the servants do perfectly in all things your will and keep they your commandments after God and rightwysness and without condition; and also without grief or offence. And see ye that be principal head, or prelate, to all your servants both less and more that they do fully, readily and truly, without offence or gainsaying, all your will and commandment that is not against God.

2. The second is that ye command them that keep and have keeping of your household afore your meyny [servants] that both within and without the meyny be true, honest, diligent, both chaste and profitable.

3. The third, command ye that no man be admitted into your household, neither inward neither outward, but it be trusted and levid [believed] that he be true and honest and namely to that office to the which he is admitted. Also that he be of good manners.

4. The fourth, be it sought and examined oft times if there be any untrue man, uncunning [unskilful], unhonest, lecherous, strifeful, drunk, lewd, unprofitable.

If there be any such found or diffamed upon these things that they be cast out or put fro the household.

5. The fifth, command ye that in no wise be in the household men debateful or strifeful, but that all be of one accord: of one will, even like as in them is one mind and one soul.

6. The sixth, command ye that all those that serve in any office be obedient and ready to them that be above them in things that pertain to their office.

7. The seventh, command ye that your gentlemen yeomen and other, daily bear and wear their robes in your presence and, namely, at the meat for your worship, and not old robes and not according to the livery, neither wear they old shoon, nor defiled.

8. The viii., command ye that your alms be kept and not sent to boys and knaves, neither in the hall, nor out of the hall, nor be wasted in suppers nor dinners of grooms, but wisely, temperately, without bate [abatement] or betyng [increase], be it distributed, and then departed [dealt out] to poor men, beggars, sick folk, and feeble.

9. The ix., make ye your household to sit in the hall as much as ye may at the boards of one part and of the other part [on either side], and let them sit together as many as may, not here four and three there; and when your chief meyny be set, then all grooms may enter, sit, and rise.

10. The x., straitly forbid ye that no wife be at your meat. And sit ye ever in the middle of the high board that both your visage and cheer be showed

to all men of both parts and that ye may see lightly [easily] the services and defaults; and diligently see ye that every day in your meat season be two men ordained to oversee your meyny, and of that [for that] they shall dread you.

11. The xi., command ye and give license as little time as ye may with honesty, to them that be in your household to go home. And when ye give license to them, assign ye to them a short day of coming again, under pain of losing their service. And if any man speak or be wroth, say to him, "What! will ye be lord? Ye will that I serve you after your will." And they that will not hear that ye say, effectually be they warned, and ye shall provide other servants, the which shall serve you to your will and pleasing.

12. The xii. is, command the pantler with your bread and the butler with wine and ale come together afore you at the table afore grace, and let be there three yeomen assigned to serve the high table and the two side tables on solemn days. And lay they not the vessels deserving for wine or ale upon the table but afore you: but be they laid under the table.

13. The 13, command ye the steward that he be busy and diligent to keep the men in his own person inward and outward, and, namely, in the hall and at meat that they behave themselves honestly, without strife, foul speaking, and noise. And, that they that be ordained to set messes, bring them by order and continually till all be served, and not inordinately

and through affection to persons, or by speciality. And take ye heed to this till the messes be fully set in the hall, and after tend ye to your meat.

14. The xiv., command ye that your dish be well filled and heaped, namely, of entremes [entremets] and of pittance [regular fare] without fat carking [loading it], that ye may part courteously to those that sit beside, both of the right hand and of the left, through all the high table and to others as pleaseth you, though [*probably we should read* so that] they have of the same that ye have. At the supper be servants served of one mess and both meats, and after of cheese. And if there come guests, service shall be had as needeth.

15. The xv., command ye the officers that they admit your acknowledged men familiar, [acquaintances] friends and strangers, with merry cheer, the which [those] they know you to will for to admit and receive, and them the which will you worship [honour], and they that will to do that ye will to do, that they may know themselves to have been welcome to you and be well pleased that they be come. And also much as ye may, without peril of sickness and weariness, eat ye in the hall before your men. For that shall be to your profit and worship.*

16. The xvi., when your bailiffs come afore you speak to them fair and gently in open place and not in private. And show them merry cheer, and search and ask of them how fare our men and tenants, and how corn do and carts, and of our store,

* The withdrawal of lords from hall is blamed by other writers.

how it is multiplied. Ask such things openly and know ye certainly that they will the more dread you.

17. The xvii., command ye that dinners and suppers privily in hid places be not had, and be they forbidden that there be no such dinners neither suppers out of the hall; for of such cometh great destruction, and no worship thereby groweth to the lord.

1236.—The council at London in April, 1236.

Matt. Paris, vol. iii., p. 362.

On the 28th April, 1236, the nobles of England assembled for a parliament at London, in order to treat of the affairs of the realm. Many wondered that the king followed the advice of the bishop-elect of Valence* more than was seemly, and as they thought despised his own natural subjects; with this they were annoyed, and charged the king with fickleness, saying amongst themselves, "Why does not this bishop-elect betake himself to France, seeing that the king of France has married the eldest sister† of our queen, so that, by reason of his niece the queen of that country, he may manage the affairs of the realm of the French as he does ours?" And they were exceeding wroth. The king also, who on the first day of the parliament withdrew to the Tower of London, gave many cause to complain on this ground, and to entertain more unfavourable than favourable conjectures. The nobles were unwilling to go either singly or in a body to the king at the

* William of Provence, uncle of the queen.

† Margaret of Provence.

Tower, fearing that he might incline to light counsel and vent his wrath on them; they were warned by the words of Horace—

Quia me vestigia terrent
Omnia te versum spectantia, nulla retrorsum. ‡

The king however, restrained by motives of prudence, came from the Tower to his palace, where he might more becomingly discuss urgent business with his nobles. After several matters had been treated, he effected one praiseworthy thing, to wit that he dismissed all the sheriffs, and appointed others in their place, because they had taken bribes and departed from the path of truth and justice. Accordingly the king appointed in their place men of larger estates, greater wealth, and nobler birth, who would not be forced to seek presents and to accept bribes in order to recoup themselves. He also made them swear to accept no gifts, unless in food and drink, and that only in moderation and without any kind of excess, or earthly remuneration, whereby justice might be corrupted. ‖

1237.—Financial difficulties of Henry III.

M. Paris, vol. iii., pp. 380-81, 383.

In the year of our Lord 1237, which was the twenty-first of his reign, king Henry III. held his court at Christmas at Winchester. And forthwith he sent out through all the borders of England, royal writs, directing all who had regard

‡ 1 Epist. i. 74, 75.

‖ Stubbs's *Const. Hist.*, vol. ii. p. 53.

for the realm of England, to wit the archbishops, bishops, abbats, and installed priors, the earls and barons, to come without fail to London on the octave of the Epiphany, for the purpose of treating on royal business touching the whole realm. On hearing this, the magnates at once obeyed the royal command, believing that they were to consider imperial or other high matters. There accordingly assembled at London on S. Hilary's Day a vast number of nobles, even the whole community of the realm. And when they had taken their seats in the royal palace at Westminster to hear the king's will, William of Raleigh rose in their midst: he was a clerk and servant of our lord the king, a discreet man and skilled in the law of the land, who, acting as a sort of mediator between the king and the magnates of the realm, put forward the king's wish and intention. "My lord the king," he said, "informs you that, whatever he may have done heretofore, he will now and henceforth, without hesitation, submit himself to the counsel of you all as his faithful and natural subjects. But those who have till now, as managers of his affairs, been guardians of his treasury, have not faithfully rendered an account of all the monies received; now, therefore, our lord the king, being wholly without money, in which case any king whatever is desolate, humbly begs an aid of money from you; on the understanding that the money be collected at your good pleasure and kept to be expended for the necessary service of the realm, according to the discretion

of certain of your number chosen for this purpose." At this they all and each, since they looked for nothing of the kind, murmured greatly,

Alter in alterius jactantes lumina vultus, *

and said one to another,

Fuderunt partum montes, en ridiculus mus. †

They angrily answered that they were constantly oppressed on all sides, by promises and payments, now of twentieths, now of thirtieths, and now of fiftieths; they declare that it would be unworthy of them, and injurious to allow a king, who was so easily led astray, who had never repulsed nor frightened even the least of the enemies of his kingdom, who had never extended the borders of his realm, but had contracted it and brought it under the rule of foreigners, to so often extort so much money from them, his natural subjects, as though they were slaves of the lowest degree, to their own loss and to the advantage of foreigners. On hearing this, the king, who desired to calm the general complaints, promised, under oath, to never again vex or annoy the nobles of the kingdom, provided that the thirtieth part of the movables of England was kindly granted and paid to him for his present use; for the large sum which he had lately sent to the emperor for his sister's marriage and his expenses at his own had, so he said, largely curtailed his treasury. Thereon they replied that all this had been done without the advice of

* Ovid, Heroid., ep. iii. 11.

† Hor. A.P. 139.

his faithful servants, and that they who were free from the blame ought not to be sharers in the penalty. At length they withdrew to a private place, that after moderating the king's demand and supplying his necessities, they might discuss the manner and amount of the assistance which was required. . . . . It was decided that since it would seem harsh to suddenly remove the king's present council as though they were wicked, it should be strengthened by the addition of some nobles. They accordingly add to it the earl of Warrenne, William Ferrers, and John Fitz-Geoffrey. The king, as he previously did at Windsor, made them swear that they would never for bribes, nor for any other reason, deviate from the path of truth, but would give advice that was wholesome for the king himself and to the advantage of the kingdom. On these conditions a thirtieth* of the realm, that is to say of all movables, was then granted to the king for the purpose of recruiting his treasury, saving however to every one his gold and silver, arms and horses, which were to be employed for the service of the state; ‡ the thirtieth shall be collected in every county in the following form: four trustworthy knights are to be chosen in each county together with one clerk whom the king shall add to their number; and after taking an oath of fidelity the knights shall collect the money in conjunction with the king's clerk, and the money when collected

* A writ for the collection of this thirtieth is given in Stubbs's *Select Charters*, pp. 366-368.

‡ M. Paris apparently reproduces the actual words.

shall be deposited in an abbey, religious house, or castle. To the end that if the king desire to withdraw from his intention, which heaven forbid, each man's money may by a faithful distribution be restored to him. Therefore after the archbishop of Canterbury with his bishops and clergy had first given their consent, a grant of a thirtieth of the movables of the realm was made to the king, to be generally collected throughout the kingdom from every knight and from every prelate according to the tenure of his barony. It was however often annexed to the conditions that the king shall then and thenceforth reject the advice of foreigners, whose wont it is to be ever friends to themselves and not to the kingdom, and to waste the wealth of the kingdom instead of increasing it, and that abandoning all unnatural advisers he shall cleave to the advice of his liege and natural subjects. So the council broke up, not without some murmuring of heart and conceiving of wrath, because it was so hard to turn the king's mind to wholesome counsels, and to induce him to comply with the advice of those from whom he has all earthly honour.*

1237.- The wretched state of England through papal extortions.

M. Paris, vol. iii., p. 389.

In these times the small fire of the faith began to grow exceeding chill, so that it was nigh well reduced to ashes, and scarce shewed a spark. For now

* Stubbs's *Const. Hist*, vol. ii. p. 54.

was simony practised without shame, and usurers on various pleas openly extorted money from the common people and lesser folk; charity expired, the liberty of the church withered away, religion was trampled under foot and became of no account; the daughter of Zion was made, as it were, a barefaced harlot having no shame.* Every day illiterate persons of the lowest class, armed with bulls from Rome, burst forth into threats, and despite the privileges enjoyed by our holy predecessors, feared not to plunder the revenues which our pious forefathers had assigned for the maintenance of the religious, the support of the poor and the sustaining of strangers; for thundering out their decrees of excommunication they made no delay in taking what they demanded by force. And if those who suffered wrong or were plundered took refuge in an appeal, or in their privileges, they at once suspended and excommunicated them through some other prelate under power of a writ from the pope. So not by prayers, not according to the canons, did they rob the simple-minded, as says the poet,

Armato supplicat ense potens.

Whence it came to pass that where nobles and bountiful clerks used to make the broad countryside renowned by their wealth, by entertaining travellers and relieving the poor, there did degraded creatures void of morals and full of cunning, the proctors and farmers of the Romans, scrape together all that was valuable and useful in the country,

* Jer. iii. 3.

and send it into distant lands to their masters, who live in luxury on the patrimony of the Crucified, and enjoy their pride at the cost of others. Thus might you see grief at the hearts, and tears on the cheeks of the saints, and hear complaints burst forth and sighs redoubled; many exclaiming with heartrending sobs, "It were better to die than to behold the sufferings of our nation and of the saints. Woe to England, who was once the chief of provinces, the mistress of nations, the mirror of the Church, the exemplar of religion, and is now brought under tribute. Mean men have trampled on her, and she is become the prey of them of low degree." Yet manifold sins brought these scourges on the English through the anger of Him who, by reason of the sins of the people, makes the hypocrite to reign and the tyrant to hold dominion.

From "The Song of the Church."

Political Songs, ed. Wright, Camden Society, p. 43.

(This is part of one of many songs to the same effect, which reiterate the familiar complaint of Matthew Paris against the weakness of the king, the avarice of the popes, and the venality of the bishops.)

Free and held in high esteem the clergy used to be,
None were cherished more or loved more heartily.
Enslaved now, betrayed, brought low,
They are abased sore
By those from whom their help should come:
I dare no more.

King and Pope, alike in this, to one purpose hold,
How to make the clergy yield their silver and their gold.
This is the sum, the Pope of Rome
Yields too much to the king,
To aid his crown, the tithes lays down
To his liking.

1237, Jan. 29.—The arrival of the legate Otto in England.

M. Paris, vol. iii. pp. 395 and 403.

In the same year about the feast of SS. Peter and Paul, for some unknown reason, the lord Otto, cardinal deacon of S. Nicholas in Carcere Tulliano came to England as legate under a summons from our lord the king, and without the knowledge of the magnates of the realm. For which cause many conceived great displeasure with the king, saying: "The king breaks everything, the laws, his good faith, and his promises, in everything he goes wrong. For lately he united himself in marriage to a stranger without taking counsel of his own friends and natural subjects; now has he secretly summoned a legate to disturb the whole realm; at one time he gives away his own, at another he seeks to recall what he has given away." In this manner from day to day the kingdom, divided against itself and in disorder, was brought to terrible desolation.* It was soon said that Edmund, archbishop of Canterbury, rebuked the king for acting in such a manner, and especially for summoning the legate, since he

* S. Matt. xii. 25.

knew that this would cause great loss to the realm, and be to the prejudice of his own dignity. The king however rejected his advice, as he had that of others of his own subjects, and would in no wise recall the design which he had conceived. The legate accordingly came in great state and power. The bishops and eminent clergy went as far as the shore to meet him, and some went off to him in boats receiving him with acclamations and presenting him with costly gifts. . . . . Otto was prudent and modest in bearing, and, contrary to the custom of the Romans generally, rejected the costly presents that were offered to him; thus falling short of the general expectation, by his well ordered bearing he calmed the anger which the clergy and knighthood of the whole kingdom had felt.

1237.—Indignation of the people at fresh taxation; earl Richard takes the popular side.

M. Paris, vol. iii., pp. 410-412.

At this time king Henry III. relying on crooked counsels that were contrary to his duty and to expediency, estranged himself from the advice of his natural subjects, and made himself stiff-necked against those who wished well to him, and were serviceable to the kingdom and the state; and so there was little of the affairs of the realm which was treated or managed by the advice of these latter. With a view to extort money from them by cunning pretexts, in a parliament, to which he had summoned the

nobles from afar, he declared on oath that he had no treasure whatever, nay was absolutely in want. At this the nobles were greatly troubled, and replied that the weakness of the nation through poverty and the many dangers which were threatening were due to the fact that they were too often burdened, while they saw foreigners fattening on their goods. However after a long discussion, because the king humbled himself and promised that he would then and thenceforth stand by their counsels without fail, they granted him a thirtieth of moveables, though not without great difficulty. This the king afterwards had assessed and collected in accordance not with the royal price but with the common value; and instead of having it deposited in castles and monasteries, to be expended at the discretion of the nobles, as had been arranged and determined, he entrusted it to foreigners to be carried away. He became like one bewitched, having no sense, and murmurs therefore arose among the people and the wrath of the nobles waxed hot.

Earl Richard of Cornwall, the king's brother, was the first to call the king to account. He sharply rebuked him for the great desolation that he had produced in the kingdom, and because day after day on new-found and captious pretences he spoiled his own nobles and natural barons of their goods, and thoughtlessly bestowed all he could scrape together on the enemies of the kingdom who were plotting both against him and his realm. The king, continued earl Richard, had in his time collected vast revenues and immense sums of money, nor was there an arch-

bishopric or bishopric in England, save those of York, Bath, and Winchester, which had not fallen vacant during his reign. He made a similar statement with regard to the abbacies, earldoms, baronies, wardships, escheats; yet the royal treasury which ought to be the strength and mainstay of the kingdom had received no increase. But the king had rejected his advice as well as that of his other natural subjects, and the madness which he at first displayed had grown greater and greater; he had so completely surrendered himself to the will of the Romans, and particularly of the legate whom he had inconsiderately summoned, as to seem to worship their footsteps, declaring both in public and private, that he could make no arrangements for the kingdom, no alterations and no alienations, without the assent of his lord the pope or of the legate, so that he might be called no king but a feudatory of the pope. By these and other acts of madness the king had tortured the hearts of all his nobles. His counsellors were of ill-report and mistrusted, as men who were said to encourage him in such conduct, and who were all the more hateful to the nobles of England because they themselves traced their origin from that kingdom. These were John earl of Lincoln, Simon earl of Leicester, and brother Geoffrey the Templar.

1238.—Marriage of Simon de Montfort.

M. Paris, vol. iii., p. 370.

(Simon son of Simon of Montfort came to England to seek his father's heritage of the king. He was well received by Henry

and recovered his rights. For his genealogy and kindred see Table I. at end.)

Banner of Leicester.

In the year of our Lord 1238, which was the twenty-second of his reign, king Henry held his court in London, at Westminster; and there on the day after Epiphany, which was a Thursday, Simon de Montfort solemnly espoused Eleanor daughter of king John, sister of king Henry III., and widow of William Marshal earl of Pembroke. The ceremony was performed and mass celebrated by Walter, chaplain of the royal chapel of S. Stephen at Westminster, in the king's small chapel, which is in a corner of his chamber. The king in person gave away the bride to the said Simon earl of Leicester, who received her gratefully, by reason of his disinterested love for her, her own beauty, the rich honours that were attached to her, and the distinguished and royal descent of the lady; for she was the legitimate daughter of a king and queen, and

furthermore was sister of a king, an empress,* and a queen†; so that the offspring of so noble a lady would be a kingly race. Our lord the pope too gave him a dispensation to marry her, as the subsequent narration will show.

Feb. 3, 1238.—Richard's anger at Simon's marriage.

Henry III. to the barons of the Cinque Ports. *Royal Letters, Rolls Series*, p. 15, *ed. Shirley*.

The king to the barons of the Cinque Ports greeting. We give special thanks to your fidelity for the good and laudable service which you have done to us and our predecessors. And since we believe that you have heard of the anger of R. earl of Cornwall, our brother, because we have given our sister, the countess of Pembroke, in marriage to Simon de Montfort, we command you that if he or any of his endeavour to entice or draw you to the party of my said brother, who pretends that he will do something to our honour, you will in no way do so, until you have heard from our own mouth our own pleasure, as John of Gatesden, our chaplain, whom we send you, will explain more fully. But send to us without delay from each of your ports four legal and discreet men, to speak with us and to hear our pleasure, as the same John shall tell you on our behalf.

* Isabella, wife of Frederic II.

† Joan, wife of Alexander II. of Scotland.

1238, Feb.—The marriage excites general indignation; earl Simon goes to Rome.

M. Paris, vol. iii., pp. 475-480.

Earl Richard was very wroth, for when he heard that the marriage had been clandestinely confirmed, just as it was previously arranged, that is to say, without the knowledge or assent of the magnates, he had just cause for anger; and all the more because the king had frequently sworn to take no important action without the advice of his natural subjects, and especially of the earl himself. The earl accordingly rises,* and assails the king with warnings and threats, making a serious complaint and charge against him, in that he had rashly transacted the business of the realm by the advice of foreigners whom he had sworn to utterly remove; and that, dismissing all others from his side, he had hearkened to Simon de Montfort and John earl of Lincoln, while they had brought about underhand marriages without the knowledge of his allies. Simon, as above related, had brought about a marriage with his sister, the countess of Pembroke, and John earl of Lincoln one between Richard de Clare, son of the earl of Gloucester, and his own daughter, after first winning over the king. Earl Richard was supported by Earl Gilbert Marshal and all the earls and barons of England, together with the citizens and people in general. At that time

* Earl Richard was in arms on the 3rd of February, and the king was summoning forces. Civil war threatened, but was arrested, and Henry obtained a respite. Stubbs, vol. ii. pp. 56 7.

sure hopes were entertained that earl Richard would free the land from the wretched slavery it experienced at the hands of the Romans and other foreigners; and everyone, from boys to old men, heaped constant blessings on his name. The king had not a single supporter, besides Hubert earl of Kent, and no fears were entertained of untoward action on his part, both because he was under an oath never to bear arms, and on account of his age, and his discretion, which had been proved by many trials. On discovering this the king was alarmed, and showed it by his looks; he sent messengers to the various nobles of the land to carefully inquire whether he could rely on their assistance in the storm which had arisen. They all, and the citizens of London in particular, replied that as the course on which earl Richard had entered, was calculated to their honour, and to the advantage of the realm, even though the king did not acquiesce in his wholesome counsel, for this reason they would offer no opposition to the earl's designs. On learning this the Legate, perceiving the imminence of the danger, applied all his powers to effect a reconciliation between the king and his natural subjects; he secretly advised Richard, who was the leader in the attack, to forthwith desist from his enterprise, and promised that the king would bestow on him larger estates, which grants should be confirmed by our lord the pope; he further added that, if all in the land were to rise against the king, he who was his brother ought unweariedly to stand by his side against all.

To this earl Richard replied, "My lord Legate, your business is not with the lands of the laity, nor with the confirmation of them, but with ecclesiastical matters. Do not wonder, if I am concerned about the condition of the realm, seeing I am the sole heir-apparent. The king has had the guardianship of nearly all the bishoprics in the land, and of many escheats, yet his treasury has never received any increase for the protection of the kingdom, though various enemies shut us in on every side. Moreover many wonder that the king, who mostly needs assistance and discretion, does not follow in the steps of discreet men; as of the emperor, who when we bestowed on him our sister with a large sum of money, in the hope that it would be to our advantage, only kept his wife and sent back her train without giving them either lands or treasure, though he is very rich and wealthy. We can likewise quote a similar example in the king of the French, who is married to the eldest sister of our queen. But our king of England has on the contrary loaded his wife's kinsmen and relations with lands, possessions, and money, and has made such a marriage that he is not enriched but is rather impoverished, and is not strengthened by a military alliance in case of need. Moreover he allows the revenues and ecclesiastical benefices bestowed by our pious predecessors, and especially those which they bestowed on the religious, to be seized on as spoil, and distributed among foreigners, though there are plenty of suitable men in the country; England

is become as it were a vineyard without a wall whence all they that *go by pluck off the grapes."

The nobles assembled at London to consider these matters, and after a long discussion, the king agreed to submit to the directions of some of the more influential men and swore to abide thereby.† Articles were accordingly drawn up and reduced to writing, and the seals of the legate and other magnates were affixed, to be shown to all parties in common. But while the arrangements were incomplete, and the matter was still in suspense, Simon de Montfort humbled himself to earl Richard, and through the agency of many mediators and certain presents, he obtained from earl Richard the kiss of peace. This caused great annoyance to the other nobles, who had not been consulted as to the adoption of this course, though it was through their exertions that the matter had been carried thus far. Earl John of Lincoln likewise, by praying and paying, appeased the anger of earl Richard, though he had to give security that he would make full atonement for what he had done. By these irregular proceedings the whole affair was, in a great measure, cut short, and did not take its full effect; but the misery of the kingdom was protracted and earl Richard's fair fame

*Psalm lxxx. 12.

† This plan of reform, which was produced Feb. 22nd, was, says Dr. Stubbs, the first of the many schemes of the sort which leave such important marks on the reign, and which show the instinctive tendency of the national wishes towards a limited monarchy, acting through responsible advisers.

clouded, and so it came to pass that he, who was believed to be a staff of strength, was thenceforth an object of suspicion.

However, Simon de Montfort, perceiving that the hearts of the king and of earl Richard, as well as of all the nobles, were estranged from him, and that the marriage which he had contracted with the sister of our lord the king, was already in the eyes of many entirely annulled, wasted away with excess of grief; and having seized a ship he set sail by stealth,* after extorting a large sum of money from every possible quarter: from one citizen of Leicester, Simon Curlevache, he wrung 500 marks. He then went to the court of Rome, hoping, by means of his money, to overreach it and obtain permission to enjoy his unlawful marriage. He first took service as a knight with the emperor in order to win his favour, and then obtained from him letters on the matter to the pope. ‡

1238, May. Quarrel of the Legate with the scholars of Oxford.

M. Paris, vol. iii. pp. 481-84.‖

At that time the lord legate went to Oxford

* The king's safe-conduct to earl Simon was dated March 27.

‡ After spending a large sum, Simon obtained the dispensation, to which many raised objections. But, perhaps, says Matthew Paris, the Roman Curia took too subtle a view for us to understand.—Vol. iii., p. 487.

‖ For an independent account of this riot see the Chronicle of T. Wykes, who was possibly himself then resident at Osney. *Roll Series, Ed.*, p. 84.

where, as was due, he was received with the highest honour and lodged at Osney Abbey, a house of canons. The scholar clerks sent him an honourable present in the shape of meat and drink, before breakfast. After breakfast they went to his lodging to call and pay their respects. On their arrival an Italian porter, with improper and untimely jesting, opened the gate a little, and bawled out after the Roman manner, "What do ye want?" whereto the clerks replied, "To pay our respects to the lord legate." For they felt sure that they would receive honour in return for honour. But the porter replied with taunts, and in wanton pride and abuse refused them all admittance. On seeing this the clerks made a rush and got in; the Romans wishing to keep them back struck them with their fists and sticks; while the contending parties were bandying blows and abuse, a poor Irish chaplain, who was standing at the kitchen door, happened to earnestly beg for something in God's name, as poor and hungry men will do. The master of the legate's cooks,—he was the brother of the legate, who appointed him to that post as being the most suitable person, for the legate was very much afraid of poison being given to him,—heard him but paid no heed, and being annoyed with the poor man, threw in his face some hot water from the cauldron in which rich meat was being cooked. At this wrong a clerk from the Welsh border cried out "Shame! that we should put up with this," and drawing a bow which he carried—for as the tumult increased some of the clerks had

snatched up any arms that came to their hands—he discharged an arrow which pierced the cook, whom the clerks satirically called "Nabuzaradan," which means Chief of the Cooks.* When he fell dead, an uproar arose, at which the legate, overcome with amazement and excessive fright, which may befall even the most steadfast, took refuge in the church tower, having on his canonical hood, and had the doors closed behind him. When the approach of darkness had put an end to the tumult, the legate laid aside his canonicals and mounted his best horse in haste; under the guidance of those who were acquainted with the less known fords, with much danger he crossed the river at the nearest point, that he might the more quickly fly to the protection of the king's wings. The clerks, beside themselves with rage, did not cease to search for the legate in the most secret hiding places, shouting and saying, "Where is that usurer, that simoniac, that plunderer of revenues, that thirster for moneys, who perverts the king and subverts the kingdom to enrich foreigners with our spoils?" The legate likewise in his flight while he still heard the shouts of his pursuers, said within himself:—

Cum furor in cursu est, currenti cede furori. †

And patiently enduring all things, he became as a man that heareth not and in whose mouth are no reproofs. ‡ After crossing the river as above described with only a few companions, on account of

* Jer. xxxix. 9. In our version Chief of the Guard.

† Ovid. Remed. Amor, i. 119. ‡ Ps. xxxviii. 14.

the difficulty of the passage, while the remainder lay hid in the abbey, he came to the king at Abingdon, breathless and alarmed. There, with tears and sobs, he unfolded to the king and his attendants what had happened and made a serious complaint in the matter. The king, in amazement, showed great sympathy at his pitiable story, and hastily despatched the earl of Warrenne to Oxford with an armed band to rescue the Romans, who were in hiding, and to arrest the scholars. Master Odo, the lawyer, was roughly seized and, with thirty others, ignominiously consigned to chains and prison at Wallingford Castle, which is not far distant from Oxford. The legate, when the snare was broken and he was delivered, assembled several bishops and laid Oxford under an interdict, and excommunicated all the abettors of this enormous deed. After this, at the legate's instance, the prisoners were conveyed to London in carts, like thieves, and there deprived of their revenues, put under anathema, and delivered to close custody in prison and chains.

1239.—Quarrel between bishop Grosseteste and his chapter.

M. Paris, vol. iii., p. 528.

The bishop of Lincoln was the hammer and cruel persecutor of the religious* in his diocese. For verily he rose against the canons of his own cathedral church, who had created him, and instantly required of them to set aside the dean

* —*i.e.*, those under *regular* vows, as monks.

of Lincoln and accept the visitation of the bishop, contrary to the custom of the church from a time beyond the memory of man. But they were urgent to appeal, and, after protracting the time and disputing a great deal, referred the matter to arbitrators, namely, Walter lord bishop of Worcester,* the archdeacon of that place,† and master Alan of Beccles‡; it was agreed that if they did not act canonically, it should be open to either side to make a fresh appeal to the pope, both parties in the meantime ceasing to visit. This addition, "both parties in the meantime ceasing to visit," seemed to endanger the cause of the canons; for the bishop had never visited, and so could not cease to do what he had never commenced; like Diogenes who could not lose the horns which he had never had; but the dean,¶ on whose behalf the canons were acting, would cease to visit, and so seemed to be robbed of his rights, at any rate for the time; there was such murmuring at this and a very serious scandal began to arise. The dispute and controversy thus passed into an angry stage, and the canons refused to allow the bishop to enter the chapter or make any visitation amongst them. And they were very sorry that they had made so mean a person to be bishop over them, and openly said so in the bishop's presence. So there was great strife,

* Walter de Cantelupe.

† William Scot.

‡ Archdeacon of Sudbury.

¶ Roger of Wescham, or Washam.

and after no small sum of money had been spent on either side to no purpose, an appeal was made to the pope, and master Odo de Kinkelni was appointed advocate on behalf of the chapter. One day a remarkable coincidence occurred; one of the canons who favoured the cause of the chapter, whilst preaching to the people in the noble church of Lincoln, complained before them all of the oppressive conduct of the bishop, and said "Even if we be silent, the stones will cry out"; and immediately a large part of the church broke away and fell down.

1239, June 16.—The birth of Edward I.

M. Paris, vol. iii., p. 539.

At Westminster on the night of the 16th of June a son was born to the king by Eleanor his queen. All the magnates of the realm congratulated him, and the citizens of London in particular, since the child was born in London; they assembled troops of dancers with drums and timbrels, and brilliantly illuminated the streets at night. The bishop of Carlisle initiated the infant, but the legate baptized him, although he was not a priest; Edmund archbishop of Canterbury however confirmed him; at the king's wish he was called Edward.* A great number of messengers were despatched to announce the news, and returned laden with splendid gifts. And in this matter the king cast a dark stain on his royal magnificence; for when the various messengers

* He was named after Edward Confessor, to whom Henry III. paid special veneration.

returned, the king inquired of them what each had received, and though the gifts they had brought were valuable, he commanded those who had received less to return their presents with scorn. Nor was his anger appeased till each had received satisfaction according to the pleasures of the messengers. Whereon a woman wittily remarked, "God gave us this child, but the king sells him to us."

1239, Aug. 9.—Simon earl of Leicester incurs the king's anger and leaves England.

M. Paris, vol. iii., p. 566.

On the 9th of August certain noble ladies assembled at London to accompany the queen to a monastery for her purification, as was the custom. When Simon de Montfort, earl of Leicester,* arrived with his wife, the king called him an excommunicate, and forbad him and his wife, whom he had basely and clandestinely defiled before the marriage had been contracted, to attend the festive ceremonial; after reiterated reproaches from him, the earl and his wife withdrew in confusion, and hastened by water to his lodging, at the palace of the late lord bishop of Winchester, which the king had liberally lent to the earl. The king, however, at once ordered them to be forcibly ejected. And though they returned with tears and lamentations begging for pardon, they did not appease the anger of the king, who said: "You seduced my sister

* He had returned to England Oct. 14, 1238, and in Feb., 1239, had received full investiture of his earldom.

before marriage*; and when I discovered it, I gave her to you, in order to avoid scandal, though it was against my wish. And in order that her vow might not prevent the marriage, you went to Rome where by costly gifts and great promises you bribed the curia to allow you to do that which was unlawful. Edmund archbishop of Canterbury, who was then present, knows it, and conveyed to the pope the truth about the matter; but truth was vanquished and gave way before Roman greed, under the influence of many gifts. To crown your wickedness without my advice or knowledge you have by false witnesses made me your surety." † The earl was put to shame by these words, and at the close of day he embarked on the Thames in a little boat with his wife, who was pregnant, and a small retinue, and hastily going down to the sea coast immediately crossed the Straits.

1239, July 31.—The bishops protest against the action of the legate.

M. Paris, vol. iii., p. 616.

On the 31st of July all the bishops met at London, thinking to make some satisfactory arrangement with the legate concerning the oppressions of the church of England: but the legate

*For this accusation, often repeated, M. Bémont, *Simon de Montfort*, p. 7, seems to think there was some foundation.

† Simon had given the king's name, without his knowledge, as surety for a debt of 2,800 marks of silver, which he owed to Pierre Mauclerc, count of Bretagne. Bémont, pp. 10-11.

was not at all anxious about this matter, and demanded fresh and renewed procurations of them. After holding council they replied that the ever grasping importunity of Rome had so often in various places drained the church, that almost all were exhausted, and they could scarcely draw the slightest breath, nor could they possibly endure such extortion any longer. And they added, "What benefit has the kingdom or Church so far derived from the religious tyranny of this legate, who is but a supporter of the king, a persecutor of the Church by divers exactions, for which we were now at least hoping for some consolation? Let the king, who summoned him to the kingdom without the advice of his natural subjects, supply him." And the legate seeing there was such stedfastness in many of them, had recourse to the low estate of the religious, from whom he extorted no small sum under the name of procuration. But the council broke up amid murmuring and complaints on the part of the prelates.

1240. The legate demands aid for the pope's war with the emperor.

M. Paris, vol. iv., pp. 10, 15.

(Gregory IX. had excommunicated Frederic II. in Holy Week, 1239. The excommunication had been published in England, and though the emperor was the king's brother-in-law the pope endeavoured to exact money from the land for the support of his war. M. Paris throughout speaks strongly in favour of the emperor.)

In this year all the archbishops, bishops, and greater abbats of England, together with certain

magnates of the realm, assembled at Reading to hear the lord legate unfold the pope's command. On their assembly the legate made a long speech with the view of turning his hearers' hearts towards him, and at length laid before them all the various hardships which the pope had endured to obtain justice for the church, by withstanding the attacks of the emperor Frederic. He therefore urgently demanded of them a fifth of their goods on behalf of the pope, by means of which he might be able to repel the wrong-doing of his powerful enemy. To this the bishops after taking counsel replied, that they would in no wise undertake so insupportable a burden, which concerned the whole church, without careful consideration and lengthy discussion. So a later date was appointed for deliberation on this important message. . . . First of all the bishops, the archbishop of Canterbury yielded to the above mentioned exaction of a fifth of his revenues, though he did so unwillingly, making a virtue of necessity: he paid the pope's agents 800 marks before they were exacted by force. And when the other bishops of England perceived it, they in like manner gave way.

1240.—Earl Richard takes leave of the bishops.

M. Paris, vol. iv., p. 11.

(Richard of Cornwall, Simon de Montfort, William of Salisbury, and others sailed after Ascensiontide. Before their arrival in Palestine, Amaury de Montfort, Simon's brother, was taken prisoner by the sultan of Egypt. On June 7, 1241, the barons of the kingdom of Jerusalem petitioned the emperor to appoint

Simon guardian during the minority of king Conrad; but he returned home about this time.)

Earl Richard and the other crusading nobles who were there *present, bade farewell to all assembled there, for they were ready to start on their journey to Jerusalem. And when the prelates saw this, they all burst into tears and said to earl Richard, "Why, earl, dost thou, our only hope after the king, abandon us? To whom dost thou leave us in our desolation? In thy absence will greedy foreigners attack us." Then the earl replied in tears to the archbishop of Canterbury on behalf of them all: "My lord and father, verily though I had not taken the cross, yet would I depart and absent myself, that I might not behold the evils of our nation, and the desolation of the realm, which men think I have power to prevent, though I have not."

1240.—Fresh demands of the pope; archbishop Edmund leaves England in despair.

M. Paris, vol. iv., p. 31.

Our lord the pope sent a sacred warrant to Edmund the lord archbishop of Canterbury, and to the bishops of Lincoln † and Salisbury,‡ directing them to provide for three hundred Romans in the first benefices that fell vacant, and intimating that they were suspended from appointing to benefices until that number had been suitably provided for. Whereon great amazement seized the hearts of all

* *i.e.*, at the assembly at Reading referred to in the previous passage.

† Robert Grosseteste. ‡ Robert de Bingham.

who heard it, and it was feared that one who ventured on such things would be overwhelmed in the gulf of despair.

At the same time Edmund lord archbishop of Canterbury, who by his own accord, though not by his own wish, had yielded to the afore mentioned detestable exaction, by paying 800 marks to the pope, seeing that the church of England was daily trampled on more and more, robbed of its temporal goods and spoiled of its liberties, was overcome with weariness, for that he lived to behold evils upon earth; and on reproving the king for allowing it, he obtained nothing but evasive answers. So provoked by his various wrongs, he went into exile in France, and with a scanty retinue took up his abode at Pontigny, where his predecessor the blessed Thomas had dwelt during his exile, and employed himself continually in prayers and fasting.

1240.—Reply of the rectors of Berkshire to the legate's demands.

M. Paris, vol. iv., pp. 38-42.

The legate and his accomplices still hoping to bend the rectors of Berkshire and certain others to his will and induce them to make a contribution, assembled them together and addressed them in a long harangue, adding threat to threat and piling up promises on promises. Whereunto they stedfastly replied that they would not withdraw from the form of the answer, depending on the reasons of the

bishops * ; to which though those are sufficient we add others. †

I. The rectors of Berkshire, all and singular, declare that they are not bound to make contribution against the emperor as against a heretic, since, although excommunicated, he has not yet been condemned or found guilty by the judgment of the church ; nor are they bound by reason that he is holding or attacking the patrimony of the Roman church, for the church does not employ the secular arm against heretics.

II. As the Roman church has its own proper patrimony, the administration whereof appertains unto our lord the pope, so also, by the bounty and grant of kings, princes, and other Christian nobles, have other churches theirs, which are in no wise liable to assessment by, or tribute to, the Roman church ; wherefore prelates ought not to be compelled to contribute of the patrimony of their churches.

III. Though by the letter of the law all things are said to belong to the prince, yet they do so not in the way of dominion or proprietorship, but of care and protection ; so also are the churches related to our lord the pope in this way of care and protection, and not of dominion and proprietorship ; wherefore they declare that they ought not to be compelled to make contribution.

* Given in the previous chapter, *Matt. Paris*, vol. iv. p. 37.

† This document is also given in the Burton Annals (*Annal. Monast.* i. p. 265). It is there headed, Responsiones cleri Angliæ, and begins, 'Dicunt omnes et singuli rectores ecclesiarum *Angliæ*.'

IV. When the Truth says, "Thou art Peter and upon this rock will I build My church," He reserved unto Himself the proprietorship while entrusting the care, as is evident from the words of the Gospel next following: "Whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose, &c." Not "Whatsoever thou shalt exact on earth, shall be exacted in heaven;" wherefore they declare that according to the word of God and justice they cannot and ought not to be compelled to make contribution.

V. Inasmuch as by the authority of the holy fathers, the revenues of the churches have been devoted to fixed uses, namely, of the church, the ministers, and the poor, they ought not to be turned to other uses save by the authority of the whole church; wherefore a contribution of the goods of the church may not be made for fighting, least of all against Christians.

VI. Inasmuch as the proceeds of the churches are scarcely sufficient to provide daily food for the clergy, first by reason of their meagreness; secondly because famine at times occurs in the country through a deficiency in the harvest; thirdly because there is so great a number of poor, and of strangers, some of whom we have seen perish through want of nourishment; fourthly because no one can hold more than one benefice; for these reasons they are the poorer, and, having scarcely sufficient for themselves and the poor, ought not to be compelled to make such a contribution.

VII. Even though it were a good thing to make

contributions, yet it would be advantageous to let the matter drop and it ought to be done, on account of the scandal that has arisen and been wafted abroad through the world against the Roman church; for it is publicly asserted that such exactions have elsewhere been made, and the clergy beyond measure impoverished; and that so soon as the money has been extorted the pope and emperor have come to an agreement and not one farthing has been restored; nay, if after the agreement there has been any balance or arrears, they have been rigidly exacted. Now the canon declares that, although it is not right to commit mortal sin to avoid a scandal, yet at times what is good may be let pass for the purpose of avoiding scandal; wherefore we ought not to make contribution.

. . . . . .

XI. Whereas the king and nobles of England, by hereditary right, and by good and suitable custom, have the right of patronage of the churches of England, and whereas the rectors are desirous to be appointed on their presentation, they neither ought to, nor can, agree to any contribution without taking the advice of their patrons, for in this manner prejudice might arise to them from their own churches; since the said patrons have endowed the said churches with lands and revenues for this particular purpose, to wit, that their rectors should receive guests as well rich as poor, and show hospitality both to laity and clergy, according to their means, as the custom of the place requires;

if such an exaction is made from them it ought to be stopped, for in this way the patrons will be cheated of their rights and intentions for the purpose of making this donation; and so the patrons will demand their gifts back or at least seek other grounds of complaint, and will not again found churches or bestow benefices out of their own property.

. . . . . .

XIII. Whereas they lately did elsewhere make a contribution in a like case, and whereas a promise was given to the contributors, on the authority of this same pope, that no such exaction should be made hereafter, they still feel themselves oppressed by the said burden, and ought not to make contribution; for they fear lest by frequent contributions they be drawn into a slavish and unwonted custom; the more so because in several countries many, and the French among them, do not yet consent to this contribution. Nor is it evident or notorious that any gain has accrued to the church by extortions of this kind; would to God there had been no loss therefrom. Certainly the enemies of the church are strengthened and enriched thereby, and grow stronger and stronger: it is hard for us to be undone with our own weapons; wherefore we must make no contribution.

(The legate, however, prevailed by dividing his opponents.)

1240.—Death of archbishop Edmund.

M. Paris, vol. iv., p. 72.

Edmund archbishop of Canterbury, who had

of his own accord gone into exile beyond the seas, there wasted away in body and mind; and heaving a deep sigh he would constantly repeat: "How much better it were to die, than to behold the evils of my nation and of the saints upon the earth." For those whom he had excommunicated, the legate, to the detriment of his dignity and without his consent, absolved, and those whom he had absolved the legate excommunicated. So in his desire to be released and to be with Christ, he used to pray, saying: "Woe is me that the time of my tarrying is prolonged. It is enough, nay it is more than enough, that I have beheld all things fall headlong into destruction. O Lord my God, take away my life." * So the archbishop dwelt certain days at Pontigny, where the blessed Thomas the Martyr, his predecessor, dwelt some time in exile; and there day and night, in tears and fasting, he poured forth unceasing prayers to God and S. Thomas for the state of the church of England, that was in peril. And so, worn out by fasting and grown weak through grief, with his body consumed, shrunk, and enfeebled, he fell seriously ill. By the advice of his physicians he had himself carried to Soissy for the sake of the better air. There, after a short time of suffering from dysentery, he was freed from the bondage of the flesh, and, bidding farewell to a worthless generation, went the way of all flesh. His spirit happily exchanged the exile of this life for the heavenly country. For, in truth, he was an exile, in body

* 1 Kings xix. 4.

alone tarrying on his pilgrimage here, and weary through the attacks that were made on every side. The rebels likewise, whom he had tried and excommunicated, the legate did not fail to wantonly and disrespectfully absolve, and with rash and unseemly presumption on the king's consent and permission he did many other things outside his own province, and to the prejudice of the archbishop and primate of all England. But this plague cruelly harassed all the prelates of England. Wherefore when the king and legate were jestingly conversing together, and promising to co-operate with each other against everybody in everything, a certain man censured them, saying, "Go to, go to; now well I know that, when the wolf and the shepherd have made a treaty of peace, cruel slaughter threatens the sheep." *

1241, Jan. 7.—Departure of the legate Otto.

M. Paris, vol. iv., p. 84.

On the morrow of the Epiphany, after embracing and kissing the king, the legate went on board ship at Dover, and laid aside the insignia of his legateship; so he crossed the sea and turned his back on England, where none, save the king and those whom he had fattened on the goods of the realm, mourned his departure. Nor in that hour was there left so much money in England, saving the vessels of the Saints and

* S. Edmund died at Soissy on November 16, 1240. He was canonised on Dec. 16, 1246.

ornaments of the churches, as he had wrested from the English realm. For he had disposed of prebends, churches, and divers of the wealthiest revenues to the number of more than three hundred, according to his own or the pope's wishes. Wherefore the realm was, as it were, a vineyard exposed to all that go by, which the wild boar out of the wood hath rooted up, * languishing in piteous desolation. The aforesaid legate likewise left the church of Canterbury, which was noblest among all the churches of England, in great disorder, together with many other cathedral and conventual churches that were robbed of all comfort. Nor had he strengthened any of the weak parts of the land, so that it was clearly proved that he had been sent, not to protect the sheep that were lost, but to gather the money which he had found.

1241.—Events in London: Vision of S. Thomas the Martyr.

M. Paris, vol. iv. pp. 93-95.

A certain priest, a holy and prudent man, had a vision by night, wherein an archbishop clad in full pontificals and carrying a cross in his hand, approached the walls which the king had lately built by the tower of London, and regarding them with a frown, struck them stoutly and fiercely with the cross which he carried in his right hand, and said, "To what end are ye built?" and forthwith the newly built walls fell down as though they had

* Psalm lxxx. 13.

been overthrown by an earthquake. At this the priest was frightened and says to a clerk, who seemed to be in attendance on the archbishop, "Who is this archbishop?", and the clerk replied, "It is the blessed Thomas the martyr, by birth a Londoner, who, considering the walls to be built in contumely and to the prejudice of the Londoners, hath irreparably destroyed them." Whereon the priest said, "How great was the expenditure and the toil of the workmen that he hath brought to nought." And the clerk replied, "If poor workmen who seek after and need pay, have obtained food for themselves by the work, it is endurable; but, seeing that these walls were built not for the protection of the realm but for the oppression of harmless citizens, even if the blessed Thomas had not destroyed them, S. Edmund the confessor and his successor, would ruthlessly and utterly have overthrown them." After this vision the priest awoke from his sleep, and rising in the dead of the night openly told what he had seen, to all who were in the house. And when morning came a rumour spread abroad through all the city of London, that the walls which had been built round the tower, and on which the king had spent more than twelve thousand marks, had fallen irreparably; many wondered and proclaimed it as an evil omen that on the same night, nay at the same hour of the night, in the previous year, namely on the night of S. George's day, April 23, these very walls had fallen down, together with their bastions.* The Londoners

* This is mentioned above by *Matthew Paris*, vol. iv., p. 80.

felt little sorrow at the event though they wondered greatly; for the walls were to them as a thorn in the eye. People had also been heard taunting them with threats, that the walls were built in insult to them, so that if any should dare to contend for the liberty of the city he should be put in fetters and shut up therein. And in order that if there were several prisoners they might be confined in several prisons, a great number of separate cells were constructed in them, so that no one might have any communication with any one else.

At this time also the king took away by force from the mayor of London his income of forty pounds, which each mayor had been accustomed, during his own time, to receive yearly for the honourable support of his dignity from the commune of the city, as from a republic. For the king had been informed that, on pretence of making this collection, which was limited by a fixed form, the mayor had laid a heavy hand on the poor, and secretly stored up for himself in his coffers a much larger sum than he was allowed to do. The king compelled Gerard Bat, the then mayor, to swear that he himself would no longer collect and receive that tax, nor allow any one else to collect it on his behalf. And this was done in the chapel of S. Stephen at Westminster.

Not long after, the citizens of London, contrary to the custom and liberty of the city, and like slaves of the lowest degree, were compelled, though unwillingly and reluctantly, to pay a sum of money

to the king, not under the name and title of voluntary aid, but of tallage, which sorely vexed them.

1241.—Election of Boniface of Savoy to be archbishop.

M. Paris, vol. iv., pp. 103-4.

The monks of Canterbury, who had been sent to Rome, on behalf of the convent, to obtain absolution from the terrible sentence* which the archbishop had imposed on them, returned in April. They had obtained a grant of absolution under caution, the abbat and archdeacon of S. Alban's, together with the prior of Dunstable, being appointed to arrange the matter. But their old persecutor, Simon Langton archdeacon of Canterbury, opposed their decree by immediately appealing against it; he stedfastly maintained that the letters of absolution had been wickedly obtained by false insinuations and the suppression of the truth. But the monks, who had faithfully promised the king to elect Boniface as their archbishop, as he had most earnestly entreated them to do, laid a heavy complaint before the king of the wrong they had suffered, and of the malice aforethought which they had experienced from the archdeacon Simon. The king took the part of the monks and, accepting their promise to elect Boniface, warned the archdeacon Simon with dreadful threats, that if he did not at once

* M. Paris, vol. iii., pp. 492-93. S. Edmund had quashed the election of a prior and excommunicated the whole convent in 1238.

desist from his rash design, he would feel the full force of the royal displeasure. On learning this, the said Simon, as he knew that the pope would never offend the king, and felt that he was too old to take a journey across the Alps, kept the peace and withdrew from the design he had entertained. The monks of Canterbury, finding that the pope and the king indulged them by turns and mutually assented to each other's requests, after invoking the favour of the Holy Spirit and the king, chose as shepherd of their souls Boniface the elect of Bellay, a man who was unknown to them and, as was asserted, was, in knowledge, morals, and age, unfitted for so high a dignity, when compared with his predecessors, the archbishops of Canterbury. * of lofty stature and handsome figure, and uncle of the Lady Eleanor, the illustrious queen of England, though utterly unknown to the aforesaid monks.

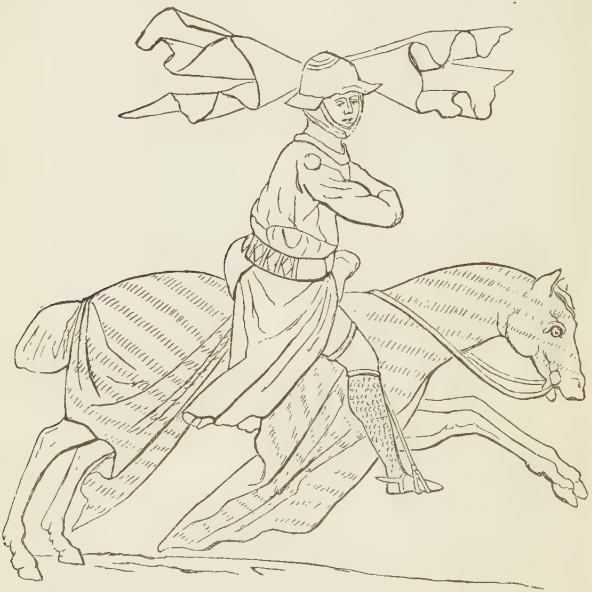
1241, June 27. –Death of earl Gilbert Marshal.

Matthew Paris, vol. iv., p. 135.

Earl Gilbert Marshal and some other nobles had held about a bowshot from Hertford, a kind of tilting-match, which is commonly called an "adventure" but might better be called a "mis-

* This is the reading of the MS. C. In B it has been erased, and the passage on the right hand written in its place. The alteration is Matthew Paris's own, probably made when time had softened his feelings towards Boniface. Similar alterations are made in many passages referring to the king or the Roman See. Cf. Luard's edition, preface to vol. iv., pp. xii. & xiii.

adventure," as a trial of strength. That he might win praise for warlike prowess, he there showed such vigour and energy in knightly pursuits that he was deservedy declared by all, considering the small size of his body, to have distinguished himself above the others. This was what the earl chiefly aimed at, for he had been originally destined for holy orders,



KNIGHT MOUNTED (13th Century).

and was reported to be weak and unskilful in warlike exercises. He was mounted on a magnificent horse, an Italian charger, to which he was not accustomed,

and dressed in handsome armour, was accompanied by a numerous escort of his own knights, who soon left him and dispersed in pursuit of gain. Now whilst the earl was at times checking his horse's speed, and then presently driving his sharp spurs into its flanks to increase, and again as need required suddenly drawing rein, both reins broke just where they joined the bit. His horse was thus beyond control, and tossing up its head struck its rider a violent blow on the chest. Some unhesitatingly declared that the bridle had been treacherously cut by a jealous person, in order that the earl being thus left at the mercy of his horse, might be dashed to pieces and killed, or at least might be taken by his opponents at will. The earl had already dined, and was half smothered with the heat and dust and sweat, and was oppressed by the weight of his helmet. Neither he nor any one else could hold his horse in. He was seized with faintness, and beginning to totter presently fell half-dead from his horse—one foot, however, caught, in the stirrup and he was thus dragged for some distance, whereby he suffered some internal injuries. To the deep sorrow of the spectators he died in great agony on the evening of the 27th of June at the house of the monks of Hertford.*

* Gilbert Marshal had stayed at home from the Crusade in order to settle his differences with the king, who would not do justice to the children of his benefactor. His death released Henry from a foe.—Stubbs's *Const. Hist.*, vol. ii., p. 59. His two brothers died in 1245, and the dignity of earl marshal passed through his sister Maud to her son Roger Bigot earl of Norfolk.

1242, Jan. 1.—Intended departure of Peter of Savoy.
M. Paris, vol. iv., p. 177.

In the year of our Lord, 1242, which was the twenty-sixth of his reign, king Henry III., as usual, kept his court at Christmas in his greater palace at London with brilliant gaiety, and prolonged his stay at Westminster through nearly fifteen days of festivity. During which time, on the day of the circumcision of our Lord, it was rumoured abroad that earl Richard had arrived in England. Whereon Peter of Savoy earl of Richmond,* like a wise and discreet man, prudently surrendered into the king's hand the more important and famous castles of the kingdom, of which he had received charge. For he feared that his sudden elevation would be very displeasing to the nobles of England, and that he had undertaken a burden beyond his strength in receiving the guardianship of these renowned castles, while the English were treated with suspicion and neglect. And that he might not be the cause of any disturbance in England on the arrival of earl Richard, who would hear very serious complaints on this matter, after wisely weighing the danger that threatened, he resigned the castles altogether and, after obtaining the king's leave, made arrangements to return to his own country. By this moderation he appeased the feelings of many. But the king, with the same readiness with which he gave him leave, hastily

* Peter of Savoy had come to England early in 1241 and received the earldom of Richmond.

recalled him before he had embarked, and urgently pressed him to receive again the castle of Dover, which he did, although with reluctance and against his own wishes.

1242.—The parliament of London.

M. Paris, vol. iv., pp. 181-184.

As the feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin drew near, the nobility of all England, prelates, earls, and barons, assembled at London by the royal command. And because they had heard that the king had so urgently called them together and had so often in this manner harassed them with false pleas, they firmly resolved, with an oath and under penalty of anathema, that at the council no one should on any account consent to an extortion of money on the part of the king. For they all well knew that the count de la Marche, who was urgently pressing the king to cross the sea with all the treasure he could scrape together, cared nothing for the military force of the English, and would set little value on the knighthood, strength, and loyalty of the kingdom, for he regarded the king as a huckster, whose money was all he wanted to get. For which cause the English were properly excited against the count and all his Poictevins, and no longer looked with a favourable eye on the king, who assented to such projects without taking the advice of his own nobles. When, therefore, the king set before them the irrevocable determination of his heart, to cross over at the summons

of the count de la Marche, and, with various arguments, demanded an aid of money, the magnates replied with great bitterness of feeling : that the design he had conceived was rash, and that he needed a bold face to make so shameless a demand; he had so frequently harassed and impoverished his liege subjects, demanding money of them as a matter of course as from slaves of the lowest degree; and had frequently obtained from them vast sums, * which he expended to no advantage. They therefore opposed the king to his face and refused any more to be spoiled of their money to no purpose. So the king had recourse to the crafty devices of the Romans, and directed them to wait till the morrow to hear his wishes on these and other matters. On the following day he summoned them one after another to his private chamber, like a priest calling his penitents to confession. And, as he could not weaken their determination when all together, he cunningly tried to weaken them one by one through his arguments, and asked them to give him an aid of money, saying, "See what a subsidy such an abbat has given me, and what such another has given." And then he held out a roll, in which it was written down that such and such an abbat or prior had promised to give so much; though none of them had given their assent thereto, or had any knowledge of it.

* A thirteenth in 1217, in 1225 a fifteenth, in 1232 a fortieth, a great aid for the marriage of Isabella in 1235, a thirtieth in 1237, besides scutages, carucages, and tallages.

By such fictitious examples and verbal snares the king warily entangled a great number.* Many, however, kept their ground and, in accordance with their oath, would on no account consent to swerve from their reply. To these the king answered wrathfully, "Am I to be perjured? I have sworn by an oath that may not be broken to cross the sea, and, with an outstretched arm, to seek my rights from the king of the French." But neither by these nor by any other words could he entrap some of them, although, as before said, he summoned each of them to come to him in private.

Yet the king again summoned some with whom he was more intimate, and addressed them saying: "What an evil example you set to the others! You valiant barons and knights ought not to waver even if others like the prelates of the church are afraid. You should be more eager than others to claim the rights of the realm, and to try the fortune of war against those who wrong us. The right which we possess to call on the magnates with the certainty of a promise to follow, is held to strengthen and support our position; look at Wales, where we have of late† happily triumphed, and see how success in the past commonly leads to success in the future. How can you have the face to abandon me your lord, who are about to take up so important a matter of state, since I shall

* He thus obtained a large sum of money, with which he equipped the expedition.

† In August, 1241, when Wales submitted without a battle, cf. M. Paris, iv., p. 150.

be held to be strictly bound to the fulfilment of my oath to cross the sea." When this came to the knowledge of the assembly of nobles they replied as follows: "Words cannot express our amazement at the gulf which has swallowed the countless wealth, that you, sir, have wrung from the various wardships of nobles, divers escheats, frequent extortions both from pastorless churches and from the estates of the nobles, and valuable donations, enough to create astonishment in the hearts of all who hear of them; and yet this weal has brought little or no advantage to the realm. Furthermore, you have lately summoned to this kingdom certain legates,* or persons acting as legates, who have collected the money that remained, as it were the gleanings after the vintage. Moreover all the magnates of England are much surprised, that without their advice or assent, you have entered on so difficult and perilous an undertaking, putting your faith in those who are faithless; and that despising the goodwill of your natural subjects, you expose yourself to the chances of fickle fortune. To the peril of your soul and the tarnishing of your fame, you are shamelessly and dishonourably breaking the truce made between the king of the French and yourself, to which you swore on your soul, and which was to be observed without breach till the time that was fixed on your behalf by earl Richard your brother, and earl Roger Bigot."

* *i.e.* —P. Rosso and Peter de Supino who came to England in 1241, and after much extortion left on the death of Gregory IX. M. Paris, vol. iv. pp. 157 and 160.

The older and more important nobles of the realm further added: "You have, to your peril, put too much faith in, and promised your presence in person to, these notorious nobles beyond the seas, who are raising up their heads against their own lord the king of the French, for which very cause no faith is to be put in them, since they are noted for their manifold treacheries. You are likewise aware that the king of Navarre, whose assistance they promise you, was lately engaged in the Holy Land, and that a wound he received is not yet healed over."

"Take warning also by the examples of the illustrious kings, your predecessors, who had impregnable castles and ample territories, large forces and great wealth in those regions, and yet could not break the firm strength of the unconquered knighthood of the French, or even retain what they possessed."

On hearing this, the king burst into a violent rage, and with an oath called the saints to witness that no fears should recall him, no ambiguous speeches beguile him from his purpose of embarking in the octave of Easter* to dauntlessly try the fortune of war against the French in foreign parts. So the parliament† dissolved, leaving fixed, but

* Henry embarked at Portsmouth on May 9.

† The proceedings of this parliament were formally recorded and are the subject of the first authoritative account of a parliamentary debate. The document follows immediately on the above passage in Matthew Paris, and is given in the *Select Charters*, pp. 368-370. Cf. Stubbs's *Constitutional History*, vol. ii., p. 59.

secret, anger in the hearts of either side.

1242.—Naval incidents of the war.

M. Paris, vol. iv. pp.198-199.

When autumn was coming on, the king of the French issued a harsh order that the persons of English merchants trafficking in his kingdom should be seized, which was very unbecoming; by so doing he inflicted a heavy wound on the ancient reputation of Gaul, which once offered an asylum and protection to all refugees and even to exiles, especially if they were peaceable, and it was for this reason that it first obtained the name of France in the vulgar tongue. When this disgraceful wantonness came to the ears and heart of the king of England, he gave a like order that all French merchants who were in England, should suffer a well-deserved retribution. At the same time also our lord the king of England, sent to his own kingdom, to the guardians of his realm, namely the archbishop of York and his colleagues, to ask aid both in men and money. They accordingly in obedience to the king's orders, sent off without delay fifty crossbowmen, a large sum of money, provisions, and men at arms, under conduct of the Cinque Ports. Thereon some of the nobles of England thinking it shameful, to sit at home at ease, whilst the king was engaged in war abroad, made ready to start with the expedition, with a proper equipment of horses and arms. Among these were certain Irish nobles, Richard de Burgh and others, who through the agency of Maurice, the justiciar of Ireland, a wise

and prudent man, after having sumptuously and carefully furnished themselves with arms and provisions, readily hastened to the king's assistance. They altogether made up a large fleet and constituted a formidable naval force. On learning this the sailors and pirates, who by order of the French king were usefully guarding the opposite coast, fitted out a fleet and armed themselves, and put out with their ships under sail and, and their galleys manned with numerous rowers, with the purpose of either attacking the approaching force at sea, or of frightening them into a retreat to the English coast. But when they were coming to close quarters a storm suddenly arose and scattered them in all directions so that the captains and pirates consulted their own safety, yielded to the fury of the winds, and within an hour scarcely knew which were the ships of their own company. The French as they were nearer to their coast than the English or Irish were to theirs, and as the wind was not much against them, quickly and successfully reached safe and nearer harbours or even their own ports: but our ships in no small terror both of the wind and the French, took to flight, and in fear, shame, and bitterness of heart were forced to put in at various distant and unknown spots. Through this the lord abbat of Evesham, the lord Richard de Burgh and many others of their company never after recovered a sound state of health but gradually pined away; until in suffering they breathed out their weary souls, which after all their toils could never thoroughly recover in a foreign land and strange climate. By

this unhappy chance, the king incurred a great and irreparable loss of powerful and prudent men, arms, and provisions of corn which he had collected from the archbishopric of Canterbury and other bishoprics, together with a considerable sum of money which he had got together from all quarters.

1242.—The battle of Taillebourg.

M. Paris, vol. iv., pp. 209-212.

Meantime the hopes of the French king were raised by the surrender of many castellans with their castles, and he directed his march on the city* of Taillebourg. This is a very noble city, with many fruitful vineyards and a pleasant stream flowing through charming meadowlands, which is crossed by an excellent bridge†; the stream, which is deep and unfordable, is called the Charente. When the king of the French approached the city, the inhabi-

* Matthew applies "civitas" in a mere literary fashion to what is really only a little country town. "Nobilis" is an epithet which it must owe to the vineyards and meadows, for it can never have been more than a small town running up the hill to the castle, which stands on a rock above the river. Matthew gives a capital description of the view from it.

† There is no bridge now. Perhaps he means a remarkable causeway built on pointed arches to lead over the meadows to the ferry across the Charente, which has probably changed its course, as a bridge would never have been replaced by a ferry. The description of Louis' army, camping in the meadows between the town and bridge, makes this almost certain. The whole story is plain enough on the spot, if only we suppose that the causeway once spanned the Charente itself. See an article on Taillebourg in the *Guardian* for Dec. 1, 1886, by Mr. Freeman.

S. Louis (from the French Archives, Register 57).

tants, having neither the will nor the power to make a stout resistance, took more wholesome counsels and came out to meet him peacefully; they surrendered themselves and their town, together with all their possessions and liberties, to the king of the French, who at once received them into his favour and protection. He forthwith proceeded to the city and was entertained there, together with his principal nobles, while the remainder pitched their tents in the meadow close by. On the morrow, which was the Sunday next before the feast of S. Mary Magdalene, the king of the French intended to cross the bridge and transfer himself and his troops to the districts of Poitou beyond. This became known to the king of England and his nobles, the chief and leader of whom was the count de la Marche, by whose advice the king got his troops in array during the night, and suddenly marched with his army to the meadow to which the bridge leads; there he pitched his tents over against the city, so that the two armies were in sight of one another. In the army of the king of the English there were present 1600 knights, twenty thousand infantry, and 700 archers, but only 24 of these were English. And so there was a king on either side of the river. When morning came our English saw the oriflamme of the king of the French and their banners and standards, and a great host of tents on the other side of the river like a large and populous town. And when the king of England, who expected nothing else than a

battle, was ready to encounter the French at the point of the sword, and the English were guarding the passage of the bridge, he said to the count de la Marche : " My lord father, where is now your promise? For by many messengers, while we were yet in England, you promised under the certificate of your own letter patent that you would, when the need arose, supply so strong a force of knights that they might oppose the French king without fear, and that we need only trouble ourselves about money." To which the count replied, " I never did so." Whence earl Richard, " Nay; but you did. And I have still got your letter patent with me in the army." " It was never signed nor was drawn up by me," said the count de la Marche. Then the king in amazement said, " What is this I hear from you, my father? Have you not often sent to me, nay, earnestly begged me by messengers and letters patent to come hither, and found fault with my delay? Where is your promise?" The count answered with a terrible oath, " I never did it. Charge it to your mother, my wife." * And again with an oath in his throat, " By the throne of God, she has devised all this without my knowledge." When earl Richard heard all this, he laid aside his armour, and taking a staff in his hand, crossed the bridge to discuss a peace and truce. For the king of England was clearly in danger of being made prisoner. It was a Sunday ; and when

* Henry's mother Isabella was hated by the French and Poictevins who said she was better called Jezebel than Isabel, as being the cause of much evil. Vol. iv. p. 255.

the earl came to the army, the French received him with great honour, and many hailed him as their redeemer, because he had delivered them by his arrangement of peace in Holy Land. On coming to the presence of the king of France he was addressed with respect. He laid his desire to obtain a truce before the king, and after some trouble a truce was granted till the morrow. And this he obtained firstly because the French favoured him on account of his deliverance of the nobles in the Holy Land, secondly because he was the king's cousin, and finally because it was Sunday. As he departed, the king saluted him as follows: "My lord earl, my lord earl, I have granted you a truce for this day and the following night, that you may in the meantime consider with yourselves what is a more wholesome policy for you to adopt for the future. Night is the time of counsel." The earl replied, "It was for that cause that I asked for the truce which I have obtained." On his return the earl went to the king and said to him secretly, "Quick, quick, let us depart. Our capture is imminent." They therefore took a hasty meal, for it was noon, and, since the sun had passed the meridian, each man busied himself in collecting his baggage. At a late hour, when it began to grow dark, the king, who had now some experience of Poictevin faithfulness, or rather faithlessness, disgracefully retreated, and in his haste did not spare the spurs; he was followed by the whole army, with great risk to men and horses, for many had had

no food, and the horses were weary and useless. The king, who was mounted on his fastest steed, never drew rein till he reached Saintes. *

S. Louis, 1226-1270 (From Chartres Cathedral).

1242, October.—Dissensions in the army.

M. Paris, vol. iv., pp. 228-9.

At this time earl Bigot, earl Roger of Winchester, and several other nobles came to the king and laid a serious complaint before him, because he had unadvisedly dragged them from their own homes to the distant lands of those who were traitors to him, without affording them any comfort or assistance;

* South of Taillebourg, higher up the Charente, on the left bank. Taillebourg is on the right. This account of the battle may be compared with that of Joinville (ed. Wailly, pp. 56-8).

wherefore, since the French king and his army had withdrawn into the interior of France to recruit their strength, they also asked leave to depart and return to England for a similar purpose. The king inquired, "Is a safe way open?" They replied, "We will ask." They accordingly asked for and obtained a free passage through France from the French king, who said: "They may freely pass through my territory without hindrance, and I hope will never return." And when his advisers blamed him for this he answered, "I would that all my enemies would go into a far country never to return." So they passed through France in peace amid the derision of the French, and returned to England.

At the same time, because a certain noble of the north of England, William de Ros by name, had not the means of staying any longer with the king on the continent, the king hastily ordered him to be disseized of his lands, without the judgment of his peers. Everyone thought this unjust and tyrannical; for William de Ros, as he was a poor man, said to the king, "My lord king, take my lands under pledge, and supply me with means to fittingly serve you as a knight, and I will remain here." Earl Richard, on hearing of these and similar proceedings, sharply rebuked his brother the king, and, a dispute arising between them, he departed in bitterness of heart, with the intention of returning home. He accordingly summoned certain of the nobles and made preparations to cross the sea. The king, with inconsiderate haste, burst into angry threats

against the earl, who, in order to cloak the self-willed violence of his brother, dissembled his feelings and remained. But when he saw that the king acted in direct opposition to the advice of his own people, he took with him the earl Marshal Walter, the earl of Hertford, and many other nobles, and going on board ship returned home, leaving the king, who had entirely given himself over to the Bordelois and Gascons, and despised the advice of his own natural subjects. Henry, however, indulging himself in ease with his queen, who had brought him a daughter, prolonged his idle stay at Bordeaux, where he spent his treasure to no purpose. *

1242.—Henry demands aid from the Cistercians.

M. Paris, vol. iv., p. 234.

The king of the English strictly directed and lovingly desired the archbishop of York † to assemble together by royal authority all the abbats in England who belonged to the Cistercian order, and meeting them with fair words to anxiously entreat them on behalf of their said lord the king, who was engaged in foreign parts warring for the advancement of the realm, and exposing his own person to the chances of a hazardous war, that they should effectually advance his cause by supplying money, and thereby give him assistance. When the abbats were gathered

* Henry did not leave Gascony till Oct. 1, 1243.

† Walter de Gray, archbishop of York, had been made guardian of the kingdom on Henry's departure. Vol. iv., p. 191.

Messenger Bringing Letter to Royal Army.

together they replied to the archbishop, "How much, Lord?" Whereto the archbishop, "A little." Whereon the Cistercians inquired, "How little?" "As much money as you can get for your wool in one year," replied the archbishop. Like the man who said,

Da mihi nunc animas, caetera tolle tibi.

For no one could endure want of food for a few days and lack the support of life without yielding his breath. But they were the king's words that were put in the mouth of the archbishop. *

1242.—Master Martin in England.

M. Paris, vol. iv., pp. 284-85

The new pope sent to England a new extortioner, Martin by name, who brought a letter of authority from the pope and had power to excommunicate, suspend, and punish in many ways those who opposed his wishes. On the strength of this he suspended the prelates of England from appointing to benefices till the wishes of the pope, who required revenues for his clergy and kinsmen, had been satisfied. Master Martin, however, thought it beneath him to receive anything less than thirty marks for fear such a great man should be thought to collect trifles; he therefore began to imperiously demand and extort from the prelates, especially the monastic ones, presents, and particularly desirable palfreys; he used to send letters to this or that abbat or prior strictly charging them to

* The Cistercians evaded the demand, but promised the king their prayers.

send him such horses as were suitable for a special clerk of the pope. Those who refused, and gave even reasonable excuses and causes for refusing, as for instance the abbat of Malmesbury and the prior of Merton, he punished severely by suspension until full satisfaction had been made. This careful inquisitor kept on the watch for vacant churches and stalls to offer them to the yawning gulf of papal needs. When the best stall at Salisbury, which was attached to the precentorship, fell vacant, he at once laid his greedy hands on it and, against the wish of the bishop, and to the great vexation of the whole chapter, bestowed it by the pope's command on a nephew of his who was a mere boy, which caused much wonder and bitterness of heart. For many believed and hoped that the Roman Curia after its manifold scourging* by God, would put a check on its avarice.

1244.—The Normans lose their English possessions.

M. Paris, vol. iv., p. 288.

The king of the French assembled at Paris all dwellers beyond the sea who had estates in England and thus addressed them: "Whatever inhabitant of my realm has estates in England, seeing that he cannot fitly serve two masters, must completely and irrevocably attach himself to me or to the king of England." For which cause some who had estates and revenues in England abandoned them and

* —*i.e.*, in the struggle with the emperor Frederic II., which had so far gone against the pope.

devoted themselves to their French properties, and others did the reverse. And when the king of England was informed of this he directed that all natives of the realm of France, and especially Normans, should be disseised of the land which they held in England. Whereon the king of the French considered that the king of the English had broken the terms of the truce* which had been concluded between them, because he had not given those who were to be deprived of their estates in one country or the other, the option of freely attaching themselves to either king, as he himself had done. But seeing that he was much weakened in body since his return from Poictou, he did not wish to awake a dispute, nay rather he took pains to restrain the hasty complaints of the Normans, and their wanton and greedy desire to attack the king of England.

1244.—Letter of Henry to the Pope complaining of his exactions.

M. Paris, vol. iv. pp. 314-15.

The king roused by these injuries and annoyed by the manifold avarice of the Romans, wrote to the pope as follows:—"To the most holy father in Christ and lord Innocent, by the grace of God supreme pontiff, Henry, by the same grace king of England, &c., greeting and kisses to his holy feet. The more that the son submits himself to the pleasure of his father, and the readier and more devoted he shows himself to his commands, the more

* Made April 23, 1243. M. Paris, vol. iv., p. 242.

does he deserve to obtain his father's protection, and to reap the advantages of his devotion and service. Since, then, father, during the whole of our reign we have shown ourselves and our kingdom obedient to your pleasure and commands in everything, although we have in some matters connected with ourselves and our kingdom generally found in you the anxiety and kindness of a father, yet in some of the provisions constantly granted by you to the clerks of England and other countries, we feel that ourselves and our kingdom have been burdened and oppressed in no slight degree. Indeed, the English churches are burdened with so many heavy provisions of this kind, that not only are the patrons of churches and those whose duty it is to confer ecclesiastical benefices defrauded of their rights, but, besides this, many works of charity are given up; for these benefactions which are usually charitably bestowed on religious houses for their sustentation, and almost all others, are exhausted by your provisions. And whereas the Apostolic See ought to show favour to its petitioners, provided the right of others is not injured thereby, may it please your holiness, we have thought it our duty to beseech you, as a father, to abstain from granting provisions of this kind, at least for a time. In the meantime, we entreat your fatherly highness to protect, with paternal solicitude, our rights and liberties which you can consider to be properly our own, and to preserve them inviolate and intact, and not allow them to be in any way disturbed by the suggestions of any at your court. And we

trust that your holiness will not be excited to anger against us if we have, in any points, opposed the tenour of your commands, since we are urged thereto by clamorous complaints, seeing that we ought not to fail in defending the rights of any man, but, by virtue of the kingly office granted to us by God, ought to afford full justice to every man."

By the same or more clever arguments, our lord the king, who was too mild and enduring, had begged his predecessor, pope Gregory, to spare the kingdom of England from the burden of such exactions. But neither the one nor the other ever thought fit to curb his inclinations in this matter. Wherefore we believe that the Lord and His Apostle Peter, in whose steps they followed not, were with just cause provoked against the Roman church, to bend their bow and make it ready.

1244.—The Parliament of 1244.

M. Paris, vol. iv., pp. 362-368.

* In the same year by a royal summons the magnates of the whole kingdom assembled at London, where at a council † held in the refectory at Westminster, the king with his own mouth asked for

* This passage is not translated verbatim.

† Matthew Paris describes this Parliament as adjourned until three weeks after the Purification, Feb. 2, and so would have us to suppose that it was the usual Hilarytide session of 1244. But this is incompatible with the history of the year. Bishop Stubbs shows it must have fallen between Sept. 9th and Nov. 18th; probably it was held at Michaelmas or soon after. *Const. Hist.*, vol. ii., note on p. 62.

an aid of money. The reason which he stated openly was, that in the past year he had crossed over to Gascony by their advice, as he asserted, and had there got indebted in a large sum of money. The magnates replied that they would consult on the matter, and withdrawing from the refectory the archbishops, bishops, abbats and priors met together for careful consideration by themselves, and at length asked the earls and barons if they would unanimously agree to their advice in making answer and provision on this matter; the latter replied that they would do nothing without the assent of the whole assembly. Then by common assent there were elected, on behalf of the clergy, the archbishop elect of Canterbury and the bishops of Winchester, Lincoln, and Worcester,* and on behalf of the laity earl Richard, earl Bigot, Simon de Montfort earl of Leicester, and Walter earl Marshal, and for the barons Richard de Montfichet, † John de Balliol, and the abbats of S. Edmund and Ramsey. And because the Charter of Liberties which our lord the king had once granted, and for the observance of which Edmund archbishop of Canterbury had become surety, had not yet been put in force, and because the aids that had so frequently been granted to the king had contributed nothing to the advancement of the king or kingdom, and because through lack of a chancellor writs had

* Boniface, William of Ralegh, Robert Grosseteste, and Walter Cantelupe.

† One of the few survivors of the twenty-five barons of Magna Carta.

often been granted contrary to justice, petition was made for the appointment of a justiciar and chancellor by whom the state of the kingdom might be strengthened.* The king from fear of seeming to adopt a new policy under the constraint of his council, refused assent to the petition of the magnates, but promised that he would himself amend the matters of which he had heard from them. The assembly was then adjourned to meet again three weeks after the Purification.† It was agreed that if the king should in the meantime of his own free will choose such counsellors and so observe the rights of the realm, the magnates would be content, and would then give an answer on granting an aid; on condition, however, that whatever money was granted to him should be expended for the service of the kingdom by the twelve above mentioned. The king delayed them several days in the wish to weary them into consenting to an aid without the postponement, and met them repeatedly, though without overreaching them, for the magnates wisely weighing the matter remained immovable. At length the king hoping to bind the clergy, at least, to his wishes, summoned the prelates, and produced a papal letter to the following effect.‡ . . It was resolved by common consent that an

* Cf. the account of a council held in 1248 on p. 120.

† There is probably some confusion as to this date, cf. the note in Stubbs referred to above.

‡ Here follows a letter from Innocent IV. to the Prelates of England, exhorting them to give liberal aid to the king as one who has always shown tolerance to the Roman church. Letter dated Genoa, July 29, iv., pp. 363-65.

answer to the pope's letter of entreaty on behalf of the king should be put off to the time before-mentioned, and when the magnates were leaving on the last day of the council, which had lasted six days, the king entreated the prelates one by one, begging them to meet him again on the morrow. And when they assembled the king sent the earl of Leicester, Peter of Savoy, Ralph Fitz-Nicholas, William de Cantelupe, and John Fitz-Geofrey, to explain his wishes and beg them to obey his will at the pope's request if his own was disregarded. They explained the king's pressing need and imminent danger from the war in Gascony and the necessity of crushing the Welsh. While the discussion was going on the king suddenly arrived unexpected and unattended, and protesting with his usual oath that their honour was as his own, heaped entreaty on entreaty. But they reply that they would carefully consider the matter, and the king withdrew in confusion. And when, after a long discussion, some were in favour of a mild answer, the bishop of Lincoln replied with these words on theological authority: "We may not be divided from the common counsel. For it is written, if we be divided we shall all die forthwith."* . . . And so the answer to the pope's request as well as that of the king himself was postponed. The king, considering that he could not weaken their determination when all were together, had recourse to Roman cunning and determined to try them one by

* Referring to the agreement with the barons. Cf. Grosseteste, Ep. 79, which may possibly refer to this demand. Cf. Luard, ii. 17.

one as he had done on other occasions; so he returned and begged them to wait at least one day longer. But some of the prelates with wary heed would not be entrapped, and by departing early in the morning escaped the meshes in which they had once been caught, and so the council broke up to the king's discontent. *

Provisions made by the magnates with the king's consent to be inviolably observed for the future.

[This document which purports to be the result of the deliberations, contains propositions of a far more fundamental character than any that have yet been broached, and to a curious degree typical of later forms of government. Whether or no it were more than a paper constitution, it anticipates several points of the later programme of Simon de Montfort, and some at least of those which for centuries afterwards were the chief subject of contention between king and people. Cf. Stubbs, vol. ii., p. 64.]

"As for the liberties obtained, granted, and confirmed by a charter of the king on a previous occasion let them henceforth be observed. And for the better security thereof let a new charter be made with special mention of these points. And let all the prelates solemnly excommunicate those persons who knowingly and deliberately presume to impugn the liberties granted by our lord the king or to hinder their observance; and let the position of those who, since the last concession, have received any injury in their liberties be made good. And whereas the promise made on that occasion has not so far been observed

* A description of this parliament is given in Stubbs, vol. ii. p. 62-63.

either by virtue of his oath or from fear of the sentence pronounced by S. Edmund, to the end that danger of this kind may not again arise and the last state be thus worse than the first, let there be chosen by common consent from the more discreet persons of the whole realm four men powerful and noble, who shall take oath to faithfully treat the business of the king and kingdom, and to show justice to all men without receiving of persons. These four shall follow our lord the king, and there shall always be present, if not all of them, yet two who may hear the complaints of individuals and give speedy assistance to those who are suffering wrong. The treasury of our lord the king is to be managed under their inspection and attestation, and money specially granted by the whole community for the service of the king and kingdom, is to be expended by them according as they think best. And they shall be conservators of liberties. And as they are elected by the assent of all, so without the common assent none of them shall be removed. And if one of them is taken from our midst, * then by the consent and election of the three another shall be substituted in his place within two months. And there shall not again be a full assembly without these four, except under necessity or at their request. The justiciar and chancellor are to be chosen by all, and whereas they ought constantly to be with the king, they may be of the number of the conservators. And if for any cause the king take away the seal from the chancellor, whatever is sealed

* —*i.e.*, by death.

in the interval is to be null and void. And afterwards the seal is to be restored to the chancellor. No justiciar or chancellor is to be appointed in place of another, except through the solemn assembly and assent of all. There are to be two justices of the bench and two barons of the exchequer, and at least one justice of the Jews. For this turn they are to be appointed by common election, and, as they are to treat of the concerns of all, so in the selection of them the assent of all should concur. But, hereafter, when it shall be necessary to appoint a successor to any of them, it shall be done by the provision of the four counsellors aforesaid. Those who have been hitherto suspected or are less necessary are to be removed from our lord the king." *

1244.—Master Martin sent to England.

M. Paris, vol. iv., pp. 368-69, 374-76.

Our lord the pope, believing that the pliant English would after their custom submit their necks to a contribution, as well by reason of the king's greed as of the pressing nature of his own request, despatched *a latere* a certain clerk, Master Martin, whom, owing to his insatiate rapacity, many called Master Mastinus, †

* The appeals and other interferences of Master Martin distracted the attention of the magnates, and nothing was really settled. On the 3rd of November the barons refused to grant money (cf. vol. iv., p. 395); but after an adjournment a scutage of twenty shillings was in February, 1245, granted for the marriage of the king's eldest daughter; Matthew Paris wrongly dates this aid in 1244, cf. vol. iv., p. 372; but cf. Stubbs, vol. ii. pp. 62-64.

† From French *mastin*, a mastiff.

with great unheard-of powers, fuller than any we remember a legate to have had. For he stretched forth his hand to exact a contribution, to make provisions for unknown persons after the impulse of his own mind and setting reason aside, and to forcibly extort revenues and bestow them on kinsmen of the pope; and this he did, being armed with authority by the pope, from whom he displayed each day new charters adapted to his own wishes or any sudden emergency. For which reason some said he had a quantity of parchments, unfilled up but ready sealed, so that he could write in them whatever he pleased; but heaven forbid! This sophist of a legate was sent in the first place to the king, begging him to make a return to the pope by diligently endeavouring to induce the English prelates to consent to give a contribution to the pope; or at least to promise a speedy payment of ten thousand marks. The king replied that his magnates, prelates, and clergy, earls, and barons, and knights are so constantly spoiled of their goods on various pretexts, that they have scarcely enough for themselves, "they have not the will or the power to contribute to me, their king, or to the pope. But as I humbled myself to them and bent to their wishes they now answer more moderately and have promised assistance according to their means." On hearing this, Master Martin retired with a downcast countenance, bringing away no hope of assistance from the king. However, he summoned the prelates and showed apostolic letters, firstly to the archbishops and bishops, and after-

wards to the abbats, both exempt and not exempt. * . . . . . The prelates were not to be turned from their purpose, but after holding due deliberation they appointed as their spokesman the dean of S. Paul's, a discreet and eloquent man, and replied to Master Martin as follows †: "Sir, the community of the prelates of England makes answer to you, as well in the matter of contributing an aid of money to the pope as in the matter of the revenues, which our lord the pope demands to be delivered to him through you from the several churches. Your proposals specially concern our lord the king of England, and generally also all patrons of churches. They likewise concern the archbishops and their suffragans—not to say all the prelates—of England. And as the king, by reason of illness, the archbishops, bishops, and other prelates of churches are not here, in their absence we have neither the power nor the right to make reply; and if we should presume to do so it would be to the prejudice of all the prelates who are absent." After they had thus spoken there came John Mansel ‡ and other messen-

* Then follows Innocent's letter asking for an aid to be paid to Martin. What with king and pope, the abbats complained, they were between the hammer and anvil. Frederic II. wrote urging the English not to contribute, but when the nobles granted an aid to the king (for his daughter's marriage), Martin renewed his demands with honeyed words, iv., pp. 369-374. This would throw the second meeting into 1245.

† The date of this answer is Feb., 1245.

‡ John Mansel, a clerk of the king's, who had afterwards charge of the great seal. Cf. iv., 601.

gers from our lord the king to strictly forbid all prelates who held baronies *in capite* of the king from pledging their lay fiefs to the Roman church and so depriving him of the service due to him. Master Martin, on understanding this, fixed a day in the middle of Lent † for those who were present to meet him, with the intention of, in the meantime, securing the presence of the king and absent prelates that he might then bring the business to a conclusion. But without the assent of the king and others who were absent they refused to accept the appointed day; and so returned each to their own home. But on the authority of fresh letters, whereof master Martin had such supply as he pleased, some of the prelates were again summoned and refused to agree to the aforesaid contribution, and offered a more effectual resistance, replying as before: "*In primis.* The poverty of the kingdom of England, which is in danger of war from all sides, does not allow of our consenting to this exaction which threatens the whole kingdom, and on account of this same poverty many churches and especially monasteries are burdened with heavy debts. II. Whereas when at the request of the cardinal legate, on account of the burden of debt under which the Roman church was asserted to labour, a contribution was lately made, to our great vexation it was not turned to the service of the Church, surely now when a simple nuncio makes the request we have reason to fear a similar or worse event. III. If a

†—*i.e.*, Lent of 1245.

second contribution were now made, we might not unreasonably fear its adoption as a precedent, for an act twice repeated leads to a custom.* IV. Whereas it is believed—or at all events is reported—that the pope is shortly going to hold a council where the several prelates will assuredly be burdened with great and costly exertions as well as with making visits, whether voluntary or not, to our lord the pope or to others whom we have never seen reject a present, it may happen that through the heaping of trouble on trouble few will be found who can endure so unbearable a load. V. Whereas our holy mother the Roman Church is alleged to be heavily laden with debt, it is just and honest that as she cannot sustain such a burden by herself, assistance should be given in common by all her devoted sons who are believed to be shortly going to meet in council. And let what chiefly concerns all, be approved by all, that so the Church may be the better relieved, and each of us the less burdened."

1244, Aug. 1.—Supposed crucifixion of a boy by the Jews.

M. Paris, vol. iv. pp. 377-8.

[This extract is given as an example of many statements of the kind to be found in the chronicles. If the tale seems incredible we may imagine how incredible the dynamite plots will seem six hunded years hence.]

On the first of August in this year the body of a boy was found unburied in the graveyard of S.

* Binus actus inducit consuetudinem. Marginal note to Codex i. Tit. 7, lex. 3.

Benedict in the city of London; on his legs and arms and chest there was an inscription written regularly in Hebrew characters. Many people assembled in amazement at the sight, and being unable to read the letters but knowing they were Hebrew sent for some converted Jews who inhabited the house which the king had founded at London; and commanded them as they loved life and limb, for the honour love and fear of their lord the king to interpret the writing without deceit; and there were present some royal bailiffs who were conservators of the peace. They also thought and not without reason that the Jews had as a taunt and insult to Jesus Christ crucified the boy—a circumstance stated to have constantly happened—or had tortured him in various ways previous to crucifixion, and when he died, had thrown him out there as unworthy of a cross. Furthermore there were on the body livid marks and weals caused by rods, with evident signs and traces of other torture. The converts were brought to read the inscription and endeavoured to do so thoroughly; now through the extension and contraction of the skin and flesh the letters were dragged on this side and on that and were much disordered and out of shape, and some were not legible; however, the names of the boy's father and mother without the surname were found, and a statement that the boy had been sold to Jews, but to whom or for what purpose they could not discover. Meantime some of the Jews of London suddenly and secretly took flight whereby they brought on

themselves merited suspicion. Some declared that the Lord worked miracles on the boy's behalf. And when it was ascertained that the Jews had sometimes done such deeds, and that holy crucified bodies had been received into a church and become renowned by miracles, although the marks of the five wounds were not visible on the hands, feet, and side, the canons of S. Paul seized the body and buried it with full ceremonies in their own church near the great altar.*

1244, Aug.—Dispute with Scotland.

M. Paris, vol. iv., pp. 379-80.

This year, by a public proclamation and general summons, the king made notification throughout England, that each baron who held of the king in chief, should hold all military services which were due to the king ready to be discharged on the royal mandate, as well the bishops and abbats as the lay barons. With a large force he set out for Newcastle-upon-Tyne, alleging as his principal motive for so doing, that Walter Cumin, a noble and powerful baron of Scotland, and certain others of the kingdom of Scotland had suspiciously strengthened two castles † in Galloway and Lothian, to the prejudice of the king of England and contrary to the charters of his predecessors. Likewise he had leagued with the French and received exiles and fugi-

* Cf. the account of the murder of S. Hugh in 1255 related in a passage given in the volume on "Simon de Montfort and his cause" in this series.

† One of these castles was the Hermitage, Ermitage in Liddesdale.

tive enemies of the king's, as, for instance, Geoffrey of Marsh * at this present time, and others on other occasions, thus, as it were, secretly desiring to withdraw the homage under which he was bound to the king. When, therefore, the assembly of the nobles of all England was gathered at Newcastle, this difficult matter was carefully discussed in a council held on and about the Assumption of the Blessed Mary. In this council, by the management of earl Richard, and by the wise and wholesome intervention of other magnates on both sides, an agreement was concluded between the two kings. The king of Scotland, † a good, just, pious, and generous man, was deservedly beloved by all the English, as well as by his own people. He had with him a very numerous and powerful force, consisting of a thousand knights sufficiently well mounted, though not on Spanish, Italian, or other costly horses, and properly equipped in mail and linen accoutrements, and also about a hundred thousand foot, who were all of one mind, and who, having made confession and being encouraged by the assurance of their preachers that they would fight in a just cause for their country, felt little fear of death. However, that the blood of so many Christians might not be shed and call unto the Lord for vengeance, thereby giving offence to Him into Whose hands it is terrible to fall, peace

* Geoffrey of Marsh, or de Marisco, an Irish noble, who, when justiciar of Ireland in 1234, had been induced by Peter des Roches to bring about the death of earl Richard Marshal. He died in 1245. Cf. iv., p. 422.

† Alexander II.

was happily restored, as witnessed in the charter below.*

1244, Nov. 3.—Financial difficulties of the king.

M. Paris, vol. iv. pp. 395-396.

On the morrow of All Souls' Day the assembled nobles of England, when the king most urgently again demanded an aid of money, as they had been so often despoiled and deceived, refused him to his face. For the king was proposing to send a numerous force against the Welsh. Moreover he was so indebted to foreign merchants, vintners, and others, for wax and other necessaries of life,† that he could scarcely appear in public for the clamorous requests of those demanding their due. From which it was clear that he he had been shamefully attacked and ensnared by the guileful and grievous traps of foreigners.

So the king in his thirst for money without consulting the assembly of the realm or at least not his own natural subjects,

‡ for a light cause and fictitious occasion shamelessly extorted

for a reasonable cause as was given to be understood by him and his agents obtained

* Charter of Alexander of Scotland giving his agreement and promise to his well-beloved and liege-lord Henry III. king of England.

† Cf. vol. v., p. 114.

‡ This is the reading of the earlier MS. C.; that on the right hand is that of B over an erasure. Cf. note on p. 59 above.

fifteen hundred marks from the citizens of London. For the king's party asserted that twenty years back they had received one of their fellow-citizens Walter Bukerel by name who had justly been expelled from the city and had long been in exile. This the Londoners contradicted and declared that he had been made a loyal subject by the entreaties and presents of his brother Andrew to the king, and that he was forgiven by the king's consent and command, and became one of their fellow-citizens as the king's rolls would testify. On the king's part it was at once* replied that the king was young at the time, impressionable and easily led and under guardianship, wherefore what was then conceded by him was invalid.† This, however, evidently redounded to the disgrace of his guardians. The decision stood, not by reason but by will alone; and the citizens had to pay the sum mentioned to be thrown away on foreigners.

1245.—Master Martin's rapacity.

M. Paris, vol. iv., pp. 416-17.

Master Martin was most watchfully and unceasingly busy in collecting revenues as he pleased for the pope's use and in bestowing them on the pope's kinsmen. Of his wanton and harmful rapacity, out

* *In instanti*, so B over an erasure. C has *cavillose*.

† On similar grounds in 1227 Henry interpreting the ordinance of 1218 restraining him until he came of age from making grants in perpetuity, to imply the nullity of all charters sealed during the minority, directed all who had received such charters to apply for their renewal.

of respect to the holy Roman Church, I think it more honourable to keep silence than to offend the ears of my hearers and the minds of the faithful by describing it. The king favoured his cause and protected him against all parties, perhaps from a hope of remuneration, and so the state of the kingdom became very wretched.

In this strait some of the nobles who lamented the manifold oppression of the kingdom gave orders to have the ports guarded and the letters, which were daily brought to England to extort money, seized. About this time it happened that one of the pope's messengers arrived with bulls and landed at Dover. The warden of the port and provost of the town at once arrested him, took away all his letters, which contained many abominations in the shape of divers pretexts for extorting money, and imprisoned the messenger himself in Dover castle. On hearing of this Master Martin went to the king to present a complaint. The king at once denied that he had authorised the action,* and ordered the messenger to be released; and, to the ruin of his kingdom and of

* Shortly after however Henry ordered an inquiry to be made as to the revenues held by Italians and Romans in England, and on finding they amounted to 60,000 marks, more than the revenue of the kingdom, was very angry and began to detest the insatiate greed of the Roman court. So 'per regni universitatem' an 'elegans epistola' was drawn up complaining of the papal exactions; and earl Roger Bigot, John Fitz Geoffrey, William de Cantelupe, Philip Basset, Ralph Fitz Nicolas, and Master William Powic a clerk were appointed to take the letter to the council at Lyons. Cf. below, and Matthew Paris, vol. iv., p. 419. Stubbs, vol. ii., p. 65.

his own honour, had the letters taken from the mayor of Dover by force, and freely presented to Master Martin for him to rejoice at pleasure in the effects produced by some of them.

1245, June 30.—How Martin leaves England.

M. Paris, vol. iv., pp. 420-22.

Some tournaments of malicious design to be held by some people assembled at Luton and Dunstable were forbidden by the king as dangerous, and after this on the morrow of the feast of the apostles Peter and Paul, Fulk Fitzwarenne was sent on behalf of the community of the realm to Master Martin, who was then staying at the New Temple in London. Eyeing him with a scowl he thus addressed him: "Depart and leave England immediately." Whereon Martin: "Who orders me? Is it you, on your own authority?" Then Fulk: "The order is given through me from the assembly of armed men who lately met at Luton and Dunstable: and if you trust in wise counsel you will not stay three days lest you and all your companions be cut in pieces." Fulk withdrew in great wrath and heaping threat on threat with terrible oaths; and Martin, breathless with alarm, at once went to the king and said: "My Lord, such have I now heard; is this done by your authority or by the boldness of your subjects?" To this the king replied: "I declare I am not the author of this proceeding. But my barons scarce keep from rebellion against me, because I have thus far tolerated the depredations and wrongs committed by you in

this kingdom on them, and which exceed all measure and justice; it is with difficulty that I have held them back in their fury from attacking you, and tearing you limb from limb." With a low and trembling voice Martin says: "I therefore beg you by the love of God and in reverence for our lord the pope to grant me a free exit and safe departure under your conduct from your land." The king, who was very excited and angry, replied: "The devil take you and give you a conduct through hell." His attendants with difficulty appeased him, and he then ordered Robert Norris, the marshal of his palace, to safely conduct Martin to the sea. Martin at once set out on his journey and kept close to the side of his guide Robert, and whenever he happened to see any riders or passers-by he was seized with such fear and trembling, that if the earth had opened he would have hidden himself under the turf. When they came to the edge of a wood which the archbishop elect of Canterbury had put up for sale, and where some countrymen had assembled to choose and buy trees, Martin in terror at the sight of them says to Robert, his guide: "Alack, alack, what I feared has happened. See, they are going to attack us. O my friend and lord Robert, have you son, nephew, kinsman, or friend for whom you desire an ecclesiastical benefice? I am ready to obtain all you demand. See they lie in ambush for my life; protect me under the shadow of thy wings." Robert replied: "God forbid that any friend of mine should thus by my means obtain entry to an ecclesiastical benefice.

I do not know who they are; but I will hasten to them while you wait me here, so that if they are ill disposed I may check this rashness by displaying the king's warrant." When on coming up to them he learned the truth, he returned to Martin quickly, and in order to impose on him said: "It was with difficulty I checked their fury and prevented their tearing you in pieces. But now let us go on stealthily and cautiously, lest a worse thing come on you; and when you set sail you will, if you are wise, never return, lest unhappily you fall into the snares of those who seek your life." Thenceforth Martin did not spare his horse's flanks, but chiding his guide's delay, hurried to the sea. On reaching Dover he embarked on S. Swithin's day, and by his departure made many glad. But that the force of this virulent plague might not utterly cease he entrusted part of his authority to one master Philip to be still exercised in the extortion of revenues; and thus he left his foul traces behind him*. This I said that everyone may know how timid are these gapers after money whose own consciences wound them.

When this came to the knowledge of the many Italians who were fattening on the richest revenues in England, they disappeared and concealed themselves in secret places. Many also of the Caursines, who had been spreading the deadly poison of their usuries amongst the western districts which till now

* On Martin in England cf. Milman's *Latin Christianity*, vol. vi., p. 235.

had been ignorant of such proceedings, secretly departed.

1245.—Letter of the commonalty of England to the Pope.*

M. Paris, vol. iv., pp. 441-444.

To the reverend father in Christ Innocent, by the grace of God supreme pontiff, the nobles and commonalty of the kingdom of England commendation and kisses to his holy feet.

Our mother the Roman church we love with all our hearts as is our duty, and with all possible affection we aim at the increase of the honour of her, in whom we ought to have a refuge at proper times, so that the heavy sorrow of the son may be soothed by the consolation of the mother. And this consolation the mother is bound to impart to the son the more gently and readily, as in return for the nourishment of her motherly kindness she requires the gratitude and devotion of her son. It cannot indeed be that that mother is ignorant of the gratitude which from times long past the kingdom of England has paid her, by granting for her exaltation and better preservation a suitable and not unfruitful subsidy, that thereby the league of affection between the church and aforesaid kingdom might be more firmly inaugurated. In process of time this subsidy came to be called Peter's pence,† but the church

* Presented at the Council of Lyons.

† Probably originated in the tribute paid by Offa of Mercia or the payment made for the maintenance of the Saxon school at Rome. Cf. Stubbs, vol. i., p. 251.

not content therewith did at other times, as well by legates* as by many other nuncios, seek divers subsidies in the aforesaid kingdom, which were liberally and willingly granted by her devoted sons, who as it were embraced her in the arms of true affection. Holy father, we do not believe that you are ignorant that our ancestors, as men of Catholic faith, inspired alike with love and fear for their Creator, and desiring to insure the salvation of their own souls, and of their ancestors as well as of their posterity, founded monasteries and endowed them with their own goods, both with domains and with the patronage of churches, to the end that in these monasteries the religious might worthily exercise the first branch of religion, and with deep devotion serving the Most High, might enjoy peace and full security, as is known to be agreeable to religion, and receive their necessary support from the said domains; and that their clerks receiving the churches that were in their patronage might undertake on their behalf the toils of the outer world, and cleaving to the second branch of religion protect them from the attacks of others. Wherefore it is to our great annoyance and most intolerable vexation that the said religious should be in any way defrauded of their patronage or appointments to churches. But now through lack of consideration on the part of you and your predecessors, in addition to the above named subsidies,

* On Legates in England cf. Stubbs, vol. iii., p. 306. On papal taxation in England cf. Milman's *Latin Christianity*, book x., ch. ii.

the Italians in England—and there is an endless number of them—are endowed with churches belonging to those very religious, and are called rectors of the churches, yet leave the said religious whom it is their duty to defend wholly undefended, and having no care of souls allow greedy wolves to scatter the flock and plunder the sheep. Whence men can truly say that they are not good shepherds since they know not their sheep, neither have the sheep knowledge of their shepherds. They are not constant in hospitality and in the giving of alms, according to the decrees of the Church, but only receive the fruits and carry them beyond the kingdom, in no small degree impoverishing it and occupying the revenues wherewith our brothers, nephews, kinsmen, and others who have deserved well of the said kingdom ought to be beneficed, who both could and would mercifully perform the said works of charity and others as well; and would in their own persons serve the churches so that they who serve the altar may also live of the altar. Yet now under constraint of necessity these men are either laymen or exiles. Now, that the truth may be more fully known to you, the Italians in England receive each year upwards of 60,000 marks, and not to mention divers other receipts, take more clear gain of revenue from the kingdom than the king himself* who is the protector of the church and holds the reins of government. Moreover after your creation†

* In 1252 Grossceteste declared that the pope's nominees had revenues within the realm three times as great as the royal income.

† Innocent IV. became pope in June 1243, the papacy having been vacant since the death of Cœlestine IV. in October 1241.

we firmly hoped and yet do hope, having confidence in you, that by the mediation of your mercy, holy father, we shall rejoice in the re-establishment in your time of our said alms in their former proper condition.

But we cannot keep silence on our own burden, wherewith we are not only burdened but are likewise oppressed beyond measure. To wit that Martin, without the licence of our lord the king,* and with fuller powers than we have ever seen a legate asked for by the king possess, has lately entered the said kingdom; and though he does not employ the insignia of the legateship, yet has multiplied the duties of legate, and daily producing fresh and unheard of powers, has gone from excess to excess; certain benefices which were already vacant, worth thirty marks a year or more, he has bestowed on Italians, and when they die others are appointed in their place without the knowledge of the patrons, and so the latter are defrauded of their presentations. Again the said Master Martin endeavours to assign similar benefices, when they fall vacant, to similar persons by reserving the presentation to certain benefices for the apostolic see; and, moreover, extorts immoderate pensions from the religious, and gainsayers and opposers he everywhere puts under

* In 1070 the Conqueror had formally laid down the rule that no legate should be allowed to land in England unless he had been appointed at the request of the king and church. Matthew Paris says (iv. p. 379) of Martin "That he behaved like a legate though he did not wear a legate's robes, which was a sophistical device to save the king's privilege."

sentence of excommunication and interdict to the great peril and danger of their souls. Inasmuch therefore as the said Master Martin, to the great disturbance of the whole kingdom, exercises the above named jurisdiction, which we cannot believe you to have knowingly issued, because in many matters he discharged wider duties than we ever remember a legate to have done, to the derogation of the privilege of our lord the king, under which he has a special favour from the Apostolic See to the effect that no one shall discharge the office of legate in England except under special request from our lord the king*; with all possible humiliation and devotion, we therefore pray your fatherly holiness, inasmuch as an affectionate father is bound to extend his hand in mercy to relieve the oppression of his sons, that it may please you in your fatherly kindness to apply a timely remedy to the above-named oppressions and burdens. For however much our lord and king, who is a Catholic prince, and watchfully zealous in the service of God, not considering the wasting of his own body, may desire, in the performance of his duty to Jesus Christ, to reverence the Apostolic See, and as its well-beloved son may long for an increase of advantage and honour to the Roman church, while at the same time fully preserving his royal rights and dignity; yet we, who in his service bear the burden and heat of the day

* See Eadmer, Bk. vi. p. 138, where Henry I. declares that he will not part with the privileges which his father had obtained from the Holy See, "in quibus haec, et de maximis una, erat, quae regnum Angliae liberum ab omni legati ditione constituerat."

and whose duty it is, together with him, to see to the preservation of the kingdom, cannot patiently endure the said oppressions, detestable alike to God and man, nor put up with burdens too heavy for us to bear, and by the grace of God we will no longer endure them, thanks to the interposition of your affectionate assistance, which we hope and trust to receive speedily and opportunely. May it therefore please you, holy father, to so hear this our request, that you may justly receive peculiar thanks from the nobles and commonalty of the kingdom of England, as from your well beloved sons in Christ.*

1245.—Answer of the pope to the above letter.

M. Paris, vol. iv., pp. 478-79.

The proctors of the commonalty of England, namely, earl Roger Bigot and his above-named colleagues, meanwhile awaited a favourable answer from the pope, as he had promised; but at length they were given to understand that they would not obtain their wishes. Thereupon they departed in great wrath, threatening with terrible oaths that they

* This letter was read at the council of Lyons by William Powic, who first rose and made a speech in complaint of papal extortion and especially of the tribute, and demanding redress; the pope taking no notice he produced this letter, and read it amid general silence. The pope postponed his answer in spite of the urgency of the messengers; he was indeed more concerned about deposing the emperor. Cf. vol. iv. pp. 440 and 445 and the note on p. 97 above. For the council of Lyons, cf. Milman's *Latin Christianity*, vol. vi., pp. 236, sqq. Stubbs, ii. p. 65.

would never pay nor allow to be paid the tribute to Roman avarice, which was an object of detestation in every age, and that they would no longer suffer the extortion of the revenues of the churches, especially of those of which the nobles of the kingdom are known to be patrons. The pope, however, with a patient mind shut his eyes to all this, and passing it over with dissimulation awaited the time for sterner action when his prosperity had revived. He therefore sent to all the bishops of England, strictly ordering each one to affix his seal to that detestable charter which king John of unhappy memory, despite the opposition of Stephen archbishop of Canterbury, had unfortunately concluded with regard to the tribute, in order that by their so doing it might be confirmed and perpetuated. And this alas! the bishops with inexcusable weakness through fear did to the great prejudice of king and kingdom. On hearing of this the king flew into a violent rage and swore that, though the bishops had disgracefully yielded, he would stand firm on behalf of the liberty of his kingdom, and so long as he had breath would never pay tax to the Roman court under the name of tribute.*

* The pope nursed his wrath, and early in 1246 a report became prevalent that he had threatened, if he could subdue Frederic, to crush the pride of the English for their complaints of oppression and especially of the tribute. In a secret interview with Louis IX., Innocent tried to stir him up to attack England, but without success (iv. p. 504). On March 18th, 1246, a parliament was held in London, at which the chief subject of consideration was the oppression of the Roman court, and Innocent's breach of the promises he had made at Lyons. iv. pp. 518-22

1246, March 18.—Articles setting forth the grievances of England.*

M. Paris, vol. iv., pp. 527-29.

I. The kingdom of England is oppressed, in that our lord the pope is not content with the subsidy, which is called Peter's pence, but extorts a heavy contribution from the whole clergy of England, and endeavours to extort yet heavier ones, and this he does without the assent of our lord the king and contrary to the ancient customs, liberties, and rights of the realm, and contrary to the appeal and opposition made by the king and kingdom in the general council.

II. The church and kingdom is oppressed, in that the patrons of churches have not the power to present suitable clerks to them when vacancies arise, as our lord the pope granted in his letters,† but the churches are bestowed on Romans, who have no knowledge of the peculiar language of the kingdom, to the peril of the people's souls, and who carry money out of the kingdom, thereby impoverishing it beyond measure.

III. There is oppression in the provisions made by our lord the pope and in the exaction of pensions, contrary to the tenor of his letters,† wherein it is stated that out of all the reservations made in England he only intended to confer twelve benefices, after the writing of the said letters; but we believe that he has given away many more benefices, and made provisions, since.

* These articles were drawn up in the parliament held March 18, 1246.

† *i.e.*—The promises made by the pope at Lyons in August, 1245.

IV. There is oppression, because Italian succeeds Italian, * and because the English are by apostolic authority dragged out of the kingdom in their causes, contrary to the customs of the realm, † and the written laws, since they ought not to be summoned amongst their opponents; and contrary to the privileges granted by the predecessors of our lord the pope to the king and kingdom of England.

V. There is oppression by the constant appearance of that infamous clause, "Non obstante," ‡ whereby the religious bond of an oath, ancient customs, the force of Scripture, the authority of grants, statutes, rights, and privileges are weakened and destroyed; for numbers of people in the kingdom of England are severely oppressed and afflicted, nor does the pope, by recalling the plenitude of his power, bear himself with such courteous moderation towards England as he verbally promised the proctors of the kingdom.

VI. There is oppression in the general tallages, collections, and assizes, made without the king's assent and will, and contrary to the appeal and opposition of the king and community of England.

VII. There is oppression in that in the benefices of the Italians, the duties, the support of the poor, hospitality, the preaching of Scripture, the useful

* One privilege granted at Lyons was "ne scilicet Ytalicus Ytalico immediate succedat." iv. p. 522.

† Constitutions of Clarendon, ch. 8.

‡ M. Paris (iv. p. 522) says the use of this clause made all the pope's promises of no effect.

decoration of churches, the care of souls, and the divine service in the churches are not attended to, as is proper and as is the custom of the country, but the walls and roofs of the buildings are falling in, and are completely ruined.

After giving their attention to these articles, they all and each agreed, with one accord, that, out of reverence for the Apostolic See, they should, by letters as well as by special messengers, with all humility and devotion, beg the pope to relieve them of such intolerable grievances and so unbearable a yoke.*

1246, July 7.—Return of the messengers.

M. Paris, vol. iv., pp. 560, 561.

On the day of the translation of S. Thomas the martyr a great council was held between the king and magnates of the kingdom at Winchester, to consider the manifold desolation of the whole kingdom and especially of the church. For the messengers who had been sent to the Roman court, namely Master

* Letters on these grievances were sent to the pope from the suffragans of the province of Canterbury, the abbats and priors of England, the nobles, clergy, and people, and the king; and also a letter on the same subject from the king to the cardinals. M Paris, iv., 529-536. In April William de Powic and Henry de la Mare, a knight, were sent with the articles and letters to the Roman court, iv., p. 551. Meantime the pope's demands continued, he claimed the property of clerks dying intestate and demanded a subsidy; the king wrote to the prelates forbidding them to pay a tallage to the pope. So the church was between two millstones, the king striving for the salvation of his kingdom, the pope for its impoverishment (pp. 552-559).

William of Powic and Henry de la Mare, had arrived with a message from the pope which contained no words of softening but rather of harshness. They declared that they could not see either in the pope's behaviour or words any signs of humiliation or moderation in the matter of the oppressions under which the kingdom and church of England were burdened and complained. For when they looked for some agreeable answer the pope had said to them, "The king of the English, who is now kicking against me and following Frederick's example, has his own plan; but I have mine, which I shall follow." And thenceforth it was with difficulty that any Englishman could arrange any business at that court; nay rather they were all repelled as schismatics and provoked with insults. And when the king and his magnates heard this he was very angry, and rightly; and he directed public proclamation to be made in every county, through all the towns and markets and assemblages, that no one should agree to a contribution or send any aid of money to the pope. And when the pope heard of this he burst into a violent rage, and again wrote in more violent terms to the English prelates ordering them, under pain of excommunication and suspension, to give satisfaction to his nuncio,* who was then staying at the new Temple in London, in the matter of the said aid before the feast of the assumption. And when the king was stedfastly prepared to stand up for the freedom of the kingdom and church his resolution was broken and he became

* Martin.

alarmed by the threats of his brother earl Richard, who for secret reasons was particularly attached to the pope and favoured the papal business, and of certain bishops, the chief of whom was the bishop of Worcester, to whom, it was reported, the pope had granted the power of laying an interdict on the land. So all the endeavours of the nobles and bishops were of no avail, and the hope of freeing the kingdom and church of England died away to the bitter and heart-felt grief of many; and satisfaction was made with impunity to the yawning avarice of Rome in the matter of the said contribution.*

1246.—Protest of cardinal John to the pope.

M. Paris, vol. iv., p. 578-79.

Meantime the pope heard that the king of England was prepared boldly to oppose his exactions—for the messengers had not yet arrived with the news of his weak fear and yielding—and he was exceedingly angry and proposed in revenge to put the kingdom of England under an interdict. But whilst he was in this foolish spirit, Master John, † an Englishman of the Cistercian order and a cardinal, opposed him, saying: "My lord, for God's sake spare your anger, which is, if I may say so, indiscreet; put the curb of moderation on the impulse of your will, considering

* Henry now gave way entirely, and allowed the English church to be spoiled of 6,000 marks for the pope's service against Frederic, who complained of the weakness of the English and especially of earl Richard.—Matthew Paris, iv., p. 577.

† John Tolet, cardinal tit. S. Lorenzo in Lucina, afterwards bishop of Porto.

how evil are the days. The Holy Land lies open to danger,* the Greek church has seceded from us, Frederic, who has no superior, nay nor equal, among the princes of Christendom, is in opposition to us. You and we, who are the head of the church, have been expelled from the Papal See, yea from the city and from Italy, and are living in exile.† Hungary and its border lands expects nothing short of ruin from the Tartars.‡ Germany is divided by internal wars.§ Spain has shown madness, even to the cutting out of the tongues of bishops.‖ France, which also has conspired against us, is now reduced to poverty through us. England, that we have so many times injured, like Balaam's ass, wounded with spurs and blows, at length speaks and rebukes us; and complains that she is harassed beyond bearing and irretrievably injured. So like the Ishmaelites, hateful to all men, we provoke all men to hate us."

The pope's mind was not however moved to pity or humiliation by these words, and he still burnt for punishment and vengeance, but now there came messengers from England who softened his grasping spirit, and affirmed that, through his most particular

* —*i.e.*, from the Charismians, who had invaded it in 1243.

† Innocent had fled from Rome to Genoa in July, 1244, and in December of that year arrived at Lyons.

‡ Hungary was devastated by the Tartars, 1241-1245.

§ —*i.e.*, between Conrad, the son of Frederic, and Henry of Thuringia, the rival emperor set up by Innocent.

‖ This was done by James of Arragon to a bishop who rebuked him.—iv., p. 578.

friends in England, whose names I who write this work am not allowed to mention, the king's resolution had been bent, so that speedy effect would be given to his wishes, and joy at this wonderfully calmed his mind and countenance.

1247.—New statutes made by the king of England.

M. Paris, vol. iv., p. 614.

In this year the king of the English, taking an example from those barons who had enacted statutes in France,* to which the king of the French had given his assent and fixed his seal, for the purpose of in some measure restraining the insatiate greed of the Roman court, made the following statutes to be inviolably observed in England:

All suits in cases of breach of faith and perjury are forbidden by the king when laymen are summoned in such cases before an ecclesiastical judge. Ecclesiastical judges are forbidden to try any cases against laymen, except cases of marriage or of wills. Item, the king prescribes anew to the bishops a fixed form in cases of bastardy, that is to say whether they be born before marriage or after. Clerks are forbidden by a royal writ to institute their actions concerning tithes before an ecclesiastical judge; that writ is intituled Indicavit. Of oaths which are exacted from clerks, to be taken before the royal justices, because

* In hatred of papal avarice certain French nobles had entered into an agreement for mutual aid against the clergy, and made an ordinance against ecclesiastical encroachments on secular jurisdiction. iv. 590-94. Louis IX. also forbade the French prelates to send money to the pope. iv. 601.

they are stated to have proceeded in their suits contrary to the king's prohibition, inasmuch as clerks are not bound to make oath unless before a spiritual judge, especially in spiritual cases. Item, of clerks arrested by the king's officers, on ground of an accusation made against them by laymen.

1247.—Clipping of the coinage.

M. Paris, vol. iv., p. 632.

At this time the sterling money, owing to the good metal of which it was composed, was, by a detestable fashion of cutting it round the edge, deteriorated and injured by those falsifiers of money, whom we call clippers; so much so that barely the inner circle remained and the lettered border was wholly cut off. The authors of this fraud, who were the merchants of the countries bordering on England, especially the Flemings, were more clearly convicted on the Continent than on this side of the Channel; and so the king of the French* punished such persons more severely than the king of the English did. And so, as the money was adulterated and depreciated beyond all measure and bearing, the king began to carefully consider as to some remedy; namely, whether the coin could not be advantageously altered in form or material. But many discreet persons considered it would be better to change the metal

* Cf. iv., p. 608. Louis, finding that its good material made English coin very useful in trade, and that it was much injured by clipping, ordered any deficient coin to be melted down. Coin-clippers were ordered to be hung on gibbets. Cf. v., 15.

than the shape, as it was not owing to the latter but for the sake of the former that the money suffered such debasement and waste.* And of this the French money and that of many other princes is evidence and example.

1247.—How the king enriched the Lusignans.

M. Paris, vol. iv., p. 650.

When Guy de Lusignan, the king's brother, left England, the king filled his saddle bags with such a weight of new money, that Guy had to increase the number of his horses. On another brother, William of Valence, he bestowed the castle of Hertford and its Honour, together with a large treasure; so that the king himself appeared to be in want, and had to plunder or beg for even his food; wherefore those who loved the king truly and without pretence were in great fear lest his almsgiving should be of no effect through the curses that the poor heaped on his head; and that his prayers in the church would be attributed to him, which God forbid, as a sin. And his third brother, Æthelmar, † he provided for with so many abundant and fruitful revenues, which, by imperious entreaties, he had extorted from each bishop and abbat, that the king

* Cf. v., p. 15. In 1248 a proclamation was made forbidding the circulation of money that was not of lawful weight and unclipped. And v. 18, where it is stated that the change caused great distress, thirty of the old shillings scarcely exchanging for twenty of the new. Earl Richard obtained the profits of the coinage in payment of the king's debts to him.

† Or Ailmar. Afterwards bishop of Winchester.

seemed to exceed the Romans in audacity, and Æthelmar to surpass the bishops in wealth.

1248.—Simon de Montfort takes the cross.

M. Paris, vol. v., p. 1.

At this time Simon earl of Leicester took the cross, that he might win absolution from his sins and gain admission to heaven. For, on reflection, he was in great alarm about the marriage he had contracted with his wife, who had previously taken a vow of chastity before S. Edmund archbishop of Canterbury. The countess, too, influenced, it is believed, by the same spirit, when she saw her husband wearing the cross, flew with all speed to assume it also. The knights and many others of their household took the cross to obtain the reward of eternal salvation.

1248, Feb. 9.—The parliament of 1248.

M. Paris, vol. v., pp. 5-7.

At the beginning of this year, on the octave of the Purification, the nobility of all England was summoned to London, to diligently and effectually treat of the business of the kingdom, which was greatly disturbed and impoverished, and injured in our days beyond measure. Besides the barons, knights, and nobles, as well as a large number of abbats, priors, and clergy, there were present nine bishops and as many earls; they were the archbishop of York, and the bishops of Winchester, Lincoln, Norwich, Worcester, Chichester, Ely, Rochester, and Carlisle;

earl Richard, and the earls of Gloucester, Leicester, Winchester, and Hereford, earl Roger Bigot the Marshal,* and the earl of Oxford; also the earls of Lincoln, de Ferrers, Warenne, and Richmond (Peter of Savoy). There were absent from this great assembly Boniface archbishop of Canterbury, who was fighting for the pope abroad, and the bishop of Durham, who was ill at a distance; the bishop of Bath was lately dead.

On the king proposing (though his intention was no secret to the assembly) to ask for an aid of money, he was severely reproached for not being ashamed to ask for such assistance at that time; especially as on the last similar exaction, to which the nobles of England had with difficulty consented, he gave his charter that he would no more cause such wrong and burden to his nobles. He was further, and no wonder, most severely rebuked for unwisely summoning foreigners, and for unwisely and lavishly bestowing and scattering the property of the kingdom among them, and for marrying the nobles of the kingdom to foreigners of low birth, thereby despising and putting aside his natural-born subjects, and that without asking the assent of both parties, which is necessary to the completion of marriage. He was also blamed, and not unreasonably, because he seized by force whatever he used in the

* Earl Roger had become earl marshal in 1246 by reason of Maud, his mother, the eldest daughter of William the great earl marshal; Walter and Anselm, the last of her brothers, had died in Dec., 1245. Cf. iv., pp. 491 and 548.

way of meat and drink—especially wine,—and even clothes, and against the will of those who were going to sell these things and were the true owners; for which cause the native dealers withdraw into hiding, as also the foreign ones, who would bring goods to sell in this country, and so trade, whereby different nations are mutually enriched and strengthened, is at a standstill; and we are defamed and impoverished because they get nothing but law-suits and idle speeches from the king; and hereby the king brings on himself terrible curses from many people to the danger and disgrace of himself and his whole kingdom. Moreover that he may have the means for imprudent almsgiving and extravagant illuminations, he forcibly seizes from these merchants wax, silk stuffs, and other goods without making any agreement in return; and this brings scandal on himself, his kingdom, and all who dwell therein; and causes grave offence to God, who hates robbery for burnt-offering.* In all these matters he is so tyrannical and oppressive that even on the sea-coast he does not allow the herrings and other fish to be disposed of at the will of the poor fishermen, who do not venture to appear in the adjoining places or in the cities for fear of being robbed, but think it safer to trust themselves to the stormy waves and seek the further shore. The unfortunate traders also are constrained and cruelly impressed by the royal agents, when their teams and horses are weary, themselves to carry the loads of the former to distant places, despite the

* Isaiah lxi. 8.

inclemency of the weather and difficulty of the roads; and thereby punishment is added to loss and wrong piled on wrong. The king was also censured because, contrary to the first and principal oath which he took at his coronation, he impoverishes even to their ruin not only vacant wardships, but also bishoprics and abbacies founded by our generous and sainted forefathers, and detains them for a long time in his own hand; of which he ought to be the protector and defender, and therefore they are said to be in his hands, that is under his protection. The king is also accused on the no slight complaints of each and all of us, because, unlike the noble kings his predecessors, he has no justiciar, chancellor, or treasurer appointed through the common council of the kingdom, as is proper and expedient, but such as follow their own wish in everything provided it is profitable to them, and who do not seek the advancement of the state but their own, by collecting money and procuring wardships and honours for themselves.*

* Cf. Stubbs, vol. ii., pp. 66, 67. "Henry replied with general promises, and the barons replied with general professions made contingent on his fulfilment of his promises. After a delay of five months he returned an arrogant refusal:—the servant was not above his master, he would not comply with the presumptuous demand; yet money must be provided. The answer of the barons was equally decided." Henry in his disappointment turned against his foolish advisers, and found money by extracting a loan from the Londoners. Cf. M. Paris, v., pp. 8, 20-22, 47-49.

1248, Oct. 13.—Westminster fair.

M. Paris, vol. v., p. 29.

The king declared and ordered proclamation to

be made throughout the city of London and elsewhere that he established a new fair, to be held at Westminster for a full fortnight. He also strictly prohibited, under pain of heavy forfeiture and loss, all fairs, which usually lasted for such a length of time in England, and also all traffic, which is usually carried on in London, both in and out of doors, that the Westminster fair might have a better attendance of people and be better supplied with merchandise. Whence it came to pass that numerous people flocked thither as to the most frequented fair, and the translation of S. Edward was celebrated, and the Blood of Christ * worshipped to an unexpected degree by the people gathered and assembled there. However, the merchants exposing their goods for sale there were exposed to great inconvenience, as they had no shelter except canvas tents, and, owing to the changeable winds which are usual at this season, suffered from cold and wet, and hunger and thirst, and their feet were soiled with the mud and their goods rotted by the rain. And when they sat down to their meals there, those who were accustomed to take their meals by the fireside in the midst of their own household, knew not how to endure this state of want. The bishop of Ely made a heavy complaint to the king on the loss of his market at Ely, which had been suspended by the decree of the king, who devised such novelties to the injury of

* Henry had obtained the Sacred Blood from the Holy Land, and brought it to Westminster on the feast of the translation of S. Edward the Confessor in the previous year. Cf. iv., p. 641.

his subjects; however, he got nothing but empty words in soothing promises of consolation to come.*

1248.—Papal and royal oppression.

M. Paris, vol. v., pp. 38-40.

This year did manifold devices many times increase the burdens which flowed from the court of Rome to the unhappy realm of England.† In addition to the unwonted straits and slavery due to the suspension of the prelates from presentation to benefices until satisfaction had been given to the avarice of Rome, and against which the petty and weak-spirited king did not protest, hateful swarms of fresh oppressions shot up every day. And though we cannot give all the oppressions—for it were difficult, nay impossible to do so—yet we have thought proper to insert some of them in this work that those who read of them may grieve, and grieving may complain to God, and so may in His favour be some day deterred, and that all may perceive the piteous plight of England, which

* This fair was held again in 1252 (M. Paris, v., 33), to the injury of Ely fair and the vexation of the Londoners.

† The pope's success had emboldened him to demand a third or a half from all holders of benefices in England; by a royal prohibition the clergy were encouraged to refuse this. In a parliament held in Feb. 1247 it was decided to send letters of complaint to the pope. Later in the year Innocent sent two Franciscans to England to extort money; despite his love for their order Grosseteste declared this exaction could not be listened to. Afterwards one Master Martin was sent to England and other clerks to Scotland and Ireland. A heavy contribution was exacted in April of that year. Cf. Matthew Paris, iv., pp. 580-85, 594-97, 600-603 and 623.

unhappily lacks good rulers and defenders. The abbat of Abingdon had received a mandate from the pope to make provision for a certain Roman without delay; but this Roman, not caring to receive any but a wealthy church, waited in silence concealing his intentions until a vacancy occurred in a noble and wealthy church, namely that of S. Helen at Abingdon, which is reckoned to be worth a hundred marks, and is supplied with every convenience, as being in a borough subject to the monastery named. The Roman after his long silence at once demanded this church, and urgently pressed for appointment under apostolic authority. But on the very day on which the church became vacant the abbat received a most pressing order from the king, full of threats and prayers and promises, and bidding him bestow the church on his uterine brother Æthelmar, though this same Æthelmar had already such a number of churches and revenues that we should not be surprised if he did not know their number or value. The abbat, in perplexity and crushed as it were between two revolving millstones, took counsel with the convent and with some wise and faithful friends, who answered: "It is clearly a case of hardship both ways; but if our lord the king is willing to protect you from the pope's violence we think it better to bestow the church on the brother of the king, who is our prince and your patron, than on the Roman who when your neighbour will always be on the watch to plot against you, and unwearied in persecution, being as it were a thorn in your eye." In due course this was signified

to the king, who promised his sure protection with every manner of indemnity. So the abbat trusting in these deceitful words bestowed the church on Æthelmar at the king's request. The Roman in great wrath went at once to the pope, and gave him with bitter complaints a full account of the affair, together with additions to excite his anger. The pope at once cited the abbat to appear before him in person and answer on the charge of disobedience. Then the abbat, obtaining no aid or consolation from the king though he often asked for it, old and feeble as he was, went in great sorrow, fear, and bitterness of heart to the Roman court, where after much trouble and great expense he had to give satisfaction to the said Roman, according to the pope's decision, by paying fifty marks a year from his chamber to the great injury of his church.*

1249, Jan. 13.—The king begs money.

M. Paris, vol. v., pp. 51-52.

Whilst the king, with open mouth, was thus greedily gaping after money,† he happened, about the feast of S. Hilary, to go to Huntingdon; there he sent for the abbat of Ramsay and, addressing him privately, said, "My friend, I earnestly beg you to

* This is followed by an account of how both king and pope made a vacancy in the abbacy of S. Edmund's afford an opportunity for exaction.

† He had extorted two thousand pounds from the Londoners, and had endeavoured to obtain money from individual nobles on pretence of a war with France. Cf. v., pp. 49-51.

afford me your assistance, by giving or, at any rate, lending me a hundred pounds; for I am in want and must have them without delay." The abbat, as he could not honourably do otherwise, replied, "I have sometimes given, but I have never lent to you, nor will I now." And he at once borrowed that sum at heavy interest from the Caursines, in order that he might supply his beggar-king. At the same time the king worried the abbat of Peterborough with similar entreaties for money, declaring it would be greater charity to bestow such assistance on him than on any beggar at his doors. But as the abbat excused himself for not yielding to his entreaties, he was loaded with reproaches, whereon he secretly left the king's house. At the same time, by a similar speech, he extorted 60 marks from the abbat of S. Alban's, although by cunning arguments he had cheated him out of no small sum, both in this year and the last. So the king, seeing that no one could or would deny him, conceived sure hopes that none of the abbats or priors would offer him any resistance.*

1249.—Henry seeks the bishopric of Durham for his brother Æthelmar.

M. Paris, vol. v., p. 55.

That vigilant and indefatigable searcher after money, the king, in an unseemly manner, laid aside

* On the strength of this he had written (Dec. 18, 1248) to the abbats and priors of Essex and Hertford, demanding a contribution. The money was required to pay his debts in Poictou and Gascony. Cf. v., pp. 52-3.

all fear of God, and sent prayer after prayer to the convent of Durham, which had the right of election.* With a view to win them over he sent prudent and circumspect messengers to counsel, entreat, and command them with threats, to elect his brother Æthelmar, by the unanimous favour of the convent, bishop of Durham and pastor of their souls; and in order to succeed in his purpose, as the poet says:—

"Imperium, promissa, preces, confudit in unum." †

The convent humbly replied, "Most Christian king and lord, may it please you to remember the first and principal oath which you sware at your coronation; and do you allow holy church at any rate occasionally to enjoy her freedom, that, with God's favour, we may choose a fit father and shepherd of our souls. You know, and the world knows, that your said brother is incompetent, by his age and learning, to undertake the burden of so important a spiritual office." The king is reported to have replied, "I have the power, and am quite willing, to keep the bishopric in my own hands for 9 or 10 years or more, when he, being of mature age, may be acceptable to you." ‡

1249, April 3.—The Gascon Accusations.

Letter probably from Simon to Henry III. *Royal Letters*, p. 52.

[Simon de Montfort was appointed to the government of Gascony in 1248. "There," says the bishop of Chester, "he had

* Nicholas of Farnham had resigned the bishopric in Jan., 1249.

† Ovid. *Met.* iv., 471.

‡ However, in Nov., 1249, Walter of Kirkham was consecrated bishop of Durham. Cf. v., p. 83.

to contend with a body of nobles whom Henry II. and Richard I. had failed to reduce, and whose only object in acknowledging Henry III. was to evade submitting to the stronger hand of Louis IX. In this contest Henry supplied him with neither men nor money; Simon had to raise funds either from his own estates or by taxing the Gascons; the king acted as if he had sent him abroad simply to ruin his fortunes and wreck his reputation, for, far from strengthening his hands, he lent a willing ear to all complaints against him."]

Sir, since your envoys, the bishop, sir Antony, and the lord Robert, left Paris, I have heard for certain that some knights of Gascony, whom your envoys saw there, because they do not recover their lands by the lord Gaston, which lands I hold in your hands under judgments, and because they know well that they will lose if they demand right in the court of Gascony, have provided themselves with everything to demand their lands by war. And they are certainly leagued together, they and their friends; and I fully understand that they will begin soon after Whitsuntide to overrun the land; but what they will have I cannot as yet be at all sure. And because the great men of the land bear me such ill will, because I uphold your rights, and those of the poor, against them, there would be danger and shame to me, and great damage to you, if I were to return to the land without instructions from you and without speaking to you. For if I were there, and they made war on me, it would be needful for me to return to you, because I have not and cannot have a penny of your revenues, because the king of France holds all, and I cannot trust much to

the people of the land. And, on the other side, one cannot stay such men by an army in the kind of war which they will make, for they will do nothing but rob the land, and burn and plunder, and put the people to ransom, and ride by night, like thieves, by thirty or forty, in different parts; wherefore it is needful in every way, if you please, that I should speak to you before I go into the country. For I have heard that they have given you to understand many sinister things of me; they will tell you soon that I was the cause of their war. Therefore, sir, if you please, do not take it amiss if, when I have finished your business in this parliament of Paris, which is going well, thank God, I return towards you to know your advice, ready to do that which you command me. And your castles and your lands and your men are well supplied, for that matter, to hold out until I come. And I have sent the lord Bidau de Coupenne there, to aid and advise them; and I have told them that I shall be there, if God will, by Whitsuntide.

Given at Paris, this Easter Eve.

1249.—Robberies in England.*

M. Paris, vol. v., pp. 56-60.

In Lent, while the king was at Winchester, two Brabant merchants came and complained that when travelling in his territories for purposes of trade they had been robbed of two hundred marks. The suspected persons were arrested, but when it

* This passage is abridged.

was decided that their acquittal should depend on the report of their district, the oath of their district released them. And what wonder, for the district was like unto them, wholely infested with robbery.

The king, moved by the complaints of the merchants, applied to his counsellors, who answered, "Sire, we have heard, and we know, that all the provinces of England lie under a similar suspicion"; and added that the merchants threatened reprisals on the English merchants in Brabant. So the king summoned the bailiffs and freemen of the county of Southampton, and says to them, "What is this I hear of you? There is no such disgraceful county or district in all the width of England. Here, in the very city where I am, or in its suburbs or neighbourhood, robberies and murders are committed. Nay more, my own wines are carried off by these evil doers, who get merry and drunk over them. To root out these and like crimes, I have appointed wise men to rule and guard my realm. I am but one man, and have neither the wish nor the power to bear the burden of the whole realm without assistance. I was born in this city, and never was so much disgrace brought on me anywhere as here. It is probable and credible—nay, is already well established—that you citizens and residents in the district are infamous accomplices. I shall summon all the counties of England, that they may try you and detect your crimes, nor will the arguments of cunning protect you any longer." This took place in the hall of the castle of Winchester, in the presence

of William the bishop. Suddenly the king cried out: "Shut the castle doors at once." Then the bishop rose and said, "Stay, sire, and hear me patiently. There are in this castle some strangers of spotless reputation, whom it is not proper for you to shut in. You only accuse the citizens of Winchester and their abettors." And then turning to the crowd he continued, "I, your spiritual father, having power over you in spiritual matters and in great measure in temporal ones, excommunicate all conspirators in this infamous crime, together with all who, for any cause, conceal the truth concerning it." Twelve men were then chosen from the citizens of Winchester and county of Southampton, to give under oath the names of any thieves they knew. They discussed this matter for some time by themselves, under good custody, but when they were called in, absolutely refused to make any mention of the thieves. The king was greatly displeased, knowing that they had some knowledge of the robbers' plans, and said in wrath, "Seize these crafty traitors, and throw them chained into the lowest dungeon, for they conceal what they ought to make known. Choose me twelve others of the city of Winchester and county of Southampton who will discover the truth on my inquiries." These other twelve, seeing that the first were imprisoned, under sentence to be hung, for suppressing the truth, were in great alarm, and, after a long and secret consultation together, came forward and disclosed thefts and crimes committed by many persons of

the neighbourhood. On this, some of the citizens and many of the countrymen, who were reputed law-abiding and good men, wealthy men whom the king had appointed wardens and bailiffs of the watch for the arrest of thieves, and also some superintendents of the royal household were arrested, convicted, and hung in gibbets. Some, however, took refuge in churches, and others in flight. When those who were taken were more closely questioned, they confessed that they had committed unheard-of crimes, both robberies and murders, with the advice and connivance of others. Of those accused and clearly convicted about thirty were taken and hung. Those of the king's household said to the officers, "Tell the king that he is to blame for our death, because he so long withheld the pay that was due to us." Whereat the king was touched with shame and grief.

1250.—Grosseteste at Rome.

M. Paris, vol. v., p. 97.

The bishop of Lincoln, old though he was, was very active in bending to his will those whom he had summoned to hear the pope's mandate,* and who had appealed to the apostolic see against his unheard-of oppressions. For the exempt abbats, the Templars and Hospitallers, had appealed, and many others who afterwards by means of money wisely purchased peace for themselves from the pope, according to the

* Grosseteste, "religiosorum fatigator indefessus," as M. Paris calls him, had summoned the monks of Lincoln to Leicester in Jan. 1250, to hear the papal privilege he had obtained, placing their churches and incomes under his authority. v., p. 96.

words of the moralist: *

Judicis auxilium sub iniqua lege rogato.

When, after his great expenditure and useless trouble, this became known to the bishop, he went in sorrow and trouble to the pope, and said, "Holy father, I blush at being defeated in my intention, for I had firm trust in your letters and promises, and now I am deceived in my expectations, for those whom I believed I had subdued have gone away free, to my confusion." The pope is said to have replied with a frown, "Brother, what is that to thee, thou hast freed thy soul; we have given them grace. Why is thine eye evil, because I am good?" The bishop said with a sigh to himself, though the pope heard him, "O money, money, what power thou hast, especially in the court of Rome." The pope in wrath replied, "O Englishmen, most wretched of mankind, each of whom gnaws at his neighbour, and seeks to impoverish him. How many monks, thine own sheep, fellow-countrymen, and servants, intent on prayer and hospitality, dost thou labour to make subject to thee, that thou mayst sate thy tyrannous greed with their goods, and make others, perchance strangers, wealthy." So the bishop withdrew in confusion, all crying out at him for an oppressor, and that he might not appear to have effected nothing he proceeded with some other business. †

* *Ethici*,—philosopher. "This is Dionysius Cato, always referred to as *Ethicus*." (Luard).

† For Grosseteste and his relation with his chapter, his monks, and with Innocent, see Milman's *Latin Christianity*, vol. vi., pp. 288-293. The end of the dispute in Grosseteste's favour is narrated by M. Paris, vol. iv., 497.

1250.—Many nobles take the cross.

M. Paris, vol. v., p. 98.

This year Roger de Montalt, one of the nobler barons of England, took the cross, and let the share which he held in woods and other revenues at Coventry to the prior and convent of that place, a fee-farm for a large sum of money, in order to provide himself with means for his journey; much of his property he entirely alienated, as also did many other nobles both on the Continent and on this side the Channel. In addition to Roger, a great number of nobles in the kingdom of England took the cross about the same time, to follow and assist the king of the French in advancing the service of the cross; among them were the bishops of Worcester and Hereford, the earls of Leicester and Hereford,* Geoffrey de Lucy, † Robert de Quency, ‡ and many others too numerous to mention; great numbers who were unwilling to openly receive the sign of the cross, or to wear it on their shoulders, through fear of the snares of the Roman court, took a secret vow, with the firm intention of going to the Holy Land in all devotion and power.

1250, March 6.—The king takes the cross.

M. Paris, vol. v., p. 101.

On the same day our lord the king received the cross from the hands of Boniface, archbishop of

* Humphrey de Bohun.

† Lord of Newington.

‡ Eldest son of Saher de Quency, earl of Winton.

Canterbury, who afterwards bestowed that holy symbol on some of the nobles, among whom were Ralph Fitz-Nicolas, the king's seneschal, William of Valence, the king's brother, and Paulin Peivre,* one of his special councillors, together with many other nobles and courtiers. Edmund, abbat of S. Edmond's, to the scorn of all men, in evil example to monks and to the prejudice of the holy order, broke all his vows and took the cross; as also John Mansel and Philip Lovel, the king's clerks and counsellors, together with many others too numerous to mention. Some evil interpreters ventured to assert that the king's only reason for taking the cross was that it would give him an opportunity to extort money from his nobles, who had previously refused his request, on the ground of winning the Holy Land and advancing the business of the cross; but discreet and more reasonable persons reserved their opinion on this matter to be proved by subsequent events.

1250.—The king's economy.

M. Paris, vol. v., p. 114.

The king, disgracefully leaving the footsteps of his father, ordered the expenses of his court and the pleasures of ordinary hospitality to be lessened † to such a degree as to bring on him the charge of inexcusable avarice. He also ordered the bounty

* Peiure. Mod. Fr. Poivre. Called in Latin Paulinus Piper, and described as *miles literatus sive clericus militaris*, vol. v., p. 242. He was the king's *dapifer* or butler.

† Cf. p. 148 below.

of his usual alms, and the number of tapers in his church to be cut down. * However, he wisely freed himself from the entanglement of the debts which he owed to many merchants, which was praiseworthy.

1250.—The Jews fined.

M. Paris, vol. v., p. 114.

About this time the king was so parched with the thirst of avarice that, laying aside all mercy, he ordered such an extortion from the Jews as made them seem utterly and irrecoverably impoverished; for he exacted from them whatever they had in their chests. Yet, wretched though they were, none of them deserved pity, since they had been constantly convicted of forging both money and seals.

1250, May 14.—Tyranny of archbishop Boniface.

M. Paris, vol. v., pp. 121-124.

On the morrow, † still swelling with wrath and wearing mail under his robes, as those who saw him assert, the archbishop came to the priory of S. Bartholomew to make a visitation of the canons there. On his arrival, as he was entering the church, he was met by the sub-prior, for the prior was not then at the house, attended by the brethren of

* Cf. p. 95 above.

† Boniface had been visiting and extorting money from the monks and clergy of his diocese, and had come to London on May 12th, and had there practised his tyranny on bishop Fulk and the chapter of S. Paul's, the latter of whom appealed to the Pope, v., pp. 119-121. Cf. Milman's *Latin Christianity*, vi., pp. 320-325.

the house in solemn procession, bearing numbers of lighted tapers, while a peal of bells was rung in his honour; the brethren were dressed in rich choral copes, the most handsome being worn by their then head, the sub-prior. The archbishop cared little for the honour showed him, and said he had come there to visit the canons. All the canons were in the choir in the middle of the church, as also was the archbishop with most of his train, which was crowded together anyhow. One of the canons, speaking on behalf of all, then said they had a tried and careful bishop who was their visitor in case of need, and they neither would nor ought to be visited by any other, for fear of showing contempt for him. At this the archbishop burst into an unseemly and inexpedient fit of rage and, forgetting his station and his holy predecessors, rushed on the sub-prior, who was standing in the midst of the church, and impiously struck this holy priest and monk a number of cruel blows on his aged breast and venerable hoary head, shouting to him, "This is the way to treat you English traitors," and then in a horrible frenzy, with unmentionable oaths, he ordered his sword to be brought to him instantly. As the tumult increased and the canons endeavoured to rescue their sub-prior from the hands of his violent aggressor, the archbishop with his own hands tore the costly cope which the sub-prior was wearing and broke off the fastening, commonly called a "*morse*," and this last was trampled on by the crowd who rushed in, and lost, as it was valuable for the

gold, silver, and jewels; the magnificent cope itself was also trampled on, torn, and irreparably injured; nor was the fury of the archbishop yet appeased, for rushing on this holy man he forced him back against the framework which divided two stalls with such violence as to crush his bones and injure him internally. The others seeing the unrestrained fury of the archbishop rescued the sub-prior from death by forcing back his aggressor. As the archbishop fell back his robes were thrown aside, and the mail beneath was clearly seen by many, who were horror-struck at the sight of an archbishop in armour; and many surmised that he had not come to make a visitation or correct errors but to excite a contest. Meanwhile his hot-tempered followers, Provençals like himself, made a fierce onslaught on the other unwarlike and unsuspecting canons, and following the orders and example of the archbishop ill-treated many of them with blows and wounds, throwing them down and trampling them underfoot. So the canons with bruised and bloody feet, disordered, maimed, and injured, went to the bishop of the city and complained in tears of this abominable conduct. The bishop answered, "Our lord the king is at Westminster, go show this unto him that at least he may be moved by so violent and manifest a breach of his peace in his own principal city."

Four of the canons therefore, the rest being unable to go from the pain of their wounds, went in the midst of a crowd of sympathising spectators to Westminster in order to enter the king's presence,

displaying the traces of their illtreatment, the blood, the bruises, the swellings, and their torn garments, to all men, who expressed their sympathy and abhorrence for so monstrous a deed. A fifth, namely the sub-prior, could not go to the court either on horse or on foot, but was carried groaning to the infirmary and, taking to his bed, passed the rest of his life in sickness. The king, however, refused either to see the canons or hear their complaints, though they waited for a long time at the door of his chamber. So, in yet greater trouble, they returned to their church, which the archbishop had profaned with the blood of priests and monks. Meantime, the whole city was greatly excited, and a sedition, as it were, arising, the citizens proposed to ring the common bell and cut the archbishop in pieces, whatever the result might be. The place rang with insults and reproaches, and, as the archbishop was hastening to his house at Lambeth, the people, who were rushing in crowds in search of him, cried, "Where is this robber, this impious and cruel cut-throat, no gainer of souls but an extorter of money, whose advancement was due not to God, nor to free and lawful choice, but was the unlawful intrusion, through the king, of an uxorious illiterate, whose foul infamy has already infected the whole city?" *

* Boniface went to the king, who defended him; and shortly after went to Rome to lay snares for the innocent. Cf. v., p. 125. The account of this outrageous behaviour has been torn out of the MS. B., probably by Paris himself. Cf. vol. iv., p. xii.

1250, June.—Ill-treatment of the Londoners by the King.

M. Paris, vol. v., pp. 127-8.

At this time the city of London was greatly disturbed, because the king exacted certain liberties from the citizens for the service of the abbat of Westminster, to their great loss and to the injury of their liberties. So far as they could the mayor of the city and the whole commune opposed the wish or rather the violence and madness of the king, who, however, proved harsh and inexorable. So in great excitement they went to earl Richard, the earl of Leicester, and other nobles of the realm, with sorrowful complaints of how the king had not blushed to violate the charters granted them by his predecessors, perhaps after the example of the pope, starting aside like a broken bow.* So the nobles named, who were much troubled at this for fear that he would make some similar attempt on them, sharply reproached and corrected the king with threats, and yet more sharply rebuked the abbat, who was believed to have been the originator and promoter of this wrong, adding to their rebuke angry abuse which out of regard for his order it is not proper to repeat. So the wisdom of the nobles happily recalled the king from the design he had conceived.

1250.—William Longsword in Egypt.

M. Paris, vol. v., pp. 132-134.

This William Longsword was the son of William Longsword, earl of Salisbury, the elder.

William Longsword had secretly learnt from some

* Psalm lxxviii. 57.

cunning spies in his employment, that certain rich eastern merchants were imprudently going under a small escort to a fair held near Alexandria, where they confidently hoped to increase their wealth. So taking all his soldiers with him he hastened thither by night, and rushing on them like lightning unawares, slew the merchants on the spot, captured some of their escort and completely dispersed the remainder; thus the whole train, which is commonly called a caravan, fell into his hand. There were camels, mules, and asses laden with silks, dyes, spices, gold and silver, as well as waggons with their teams of buffaloes and oxen, and also provisions for men and horses, of which they were much in need. Though the earl killed and made prisoners of a great number of the enemy in this skirmish, he only lost one knight and eight retainers killed however, he brought back some wounded who required medical care. Thus he returned with his wealth to the camp rejoicing in his victory. The French, who had remained inactive and were in want, were stirred with envy and covetousness, and met him with hostility on his return; all that he had gained they took from him by force like wanton brigands, imputing to him as a sufficient fault, that with rash daring against the royal command and the orders of the leaders of the army, he had, in opposition to military discipline, with excessive pride and folly, separated himself from the main body of the army. On hearing this, William promised to give full satisfaction by allowing all the food he had obtained to be distributed amongst the needy army;

but at this the French cried out claiming all for themselves, and with much abuse seized it immediately.

So William, saddened to bitterness of spirit at such an injury, laid a grievous complaint before the king, adding that his brother, the count of Artois, had been the leader in this violent trespass and plunder. The king, who was of a most pious spirit and countenance, answered humbly, "William, William, He, who knows everything, knows that I grieve for the wrong and loss inflicted on thee; I deeply fear that our pride and other sins will lead us to confusion. Thou knowest how serious a thing it would be for me in any way to excite or offend my nobles in my present perilous position." As he was speaking in came the count of Artois excited and furious like a madman, and without saluting the king or those sitting round him, in great wrath shouted at the top of his voice, "What means this, my lord king? Dost presume to defend this Englishman and to oppose thine own Frenchmen? That fellow, in contempt of thee and the whole army, guided by his own impulse alone, has of his own free will by night and in secret captured booty whereby his fame alone is spread abroad through the regions of the east, and not that of the king and his Frenchmen. Our names and titles are all thrown in the shade." Thereon the most Christian king turning his face and bending towards William said in a mild tone, "Now thou canst hear, my friend. So easily can division, which God forbid, arise in an army. At such a crisis we must put up with such things and

with even more than these." William replied, "Then art thou no king, since thou canst not justify thine own followers and punish delinquents, when I promise full satisfaction for any delinquency of mine." And wounded to the heart he added, "Henceforth I serve not such a king, I will not hold to such a lord." He then went to Acre and stayed there many days with his companions in arms, publishing to all who dwelt there the wrong he had suffered; whereby he excited the sympathy of all, and especially of the prelates, for himself, and aroused their anger against the French. Those of experience and understanding and who were approved in war, unhesitatingly foretold that this was a gloomy presage of future events, and that such sins must excite the heavy anger of the Most High. The count of Artois is reported to have said with a laugh, "Now is the army of the noble French well rid of these men with tails." *

1250.—Forest tyrannies.

M. Paris, vol. v. pp. 137-8

At this time a certain knight, named Geoffrey of Langley, a royal bailiff and inquisitor of trespasses in the royal forests, made the circuit of several districts of England, and showed such cunning wantonness and violence in the collection of money, especially from the northern nobles, that the amount of treasure collected passed the belief and excited

* In reference to a popular French story that the English had tails fixed to them as a punishment for the act of Robert de Broc, who cut off the tail of archbishop Thomas Becket's horse.

the wonder of all who heard of it. This unbounded oppression with which the king treated the northerners seems to have had its source in ancient hatred. The said Geoffrey had a large armed retinue, and if he heard any of the aforesaid nobles making excuses or murmuring he ordered them to be at once arrested and lodged in the king's prison, since the judges were hostile to them; nor could any reply be given for fear of censure. For a single small beast, a fawn or a hare, though straying in an out of the way place, he impoverished some men of noble birth even to ruin, sparing neither blood nor fortune. In comparison with him Robert Passelewe * was considered most gentle, nay all his predecessors were justified and well-spoken of when compared with him.

1250, Feb. 8th.—Death of William Longsword † the younger at Mansourah.

M. Paris, vol. v., pp. 153-4.

At length, after receiving many blows and wounds and overwhelmed with showers of stones, William began to fail from loss of blood, and breathed forth his spirit, clearly to receive the crown of martyrdom;

* Robert Passelewe had in 1244 made a severe inquisition into the occupation of the royal forests, and again in 1245, fining those who were improperly occupying them (iv. pp. 400 and 427). He had been the patron of Geoffrey Langley, who afterwards basely supplanted him. v. 137.

† William Longsword had returned from Acre at the request of Louis IX., and, joining with Robert of Artois in an attack on Mansourah, had been led by the rashness of the latter into a dangerous position in which both lost their lives.

with him fell his standard-bearer, Robert de Vere, a distinguished knight, and many English who had followed his standard from the beginning.

On the night before this battle his mother Hela, the most noble countess of Salisbury, and abbess of Laycock,* had a vision in which a knight clad in full armour was received up into the open heaven. As she knew his shield by the device on it, she

Shield of Longespee.

inquired who it was who was ascending into heaven and who was being received into such glory by the angels; and in a clear and distinct voice it was replied to her "William, thy son." She marked the night on which she saw the vision, and its meaning was afterwards made clear. But to return to our subject matter.

Robert, count of Artois, being drowned, and William Longsword having been slain, the Saracens confident of victory, surrounded the helpless Christians and mercilessly put them to the sword; and of all that glorious and renowned body of knights

* Near Chippenham in Wiltshire.

there escaped but two Templars and one Hospitaller, with one person of inferior rank who swam the river and brought word to the king of the French and rest of the army of this for ever deplorable calamity. The others who escaped were so sore wounded and weary that they could scarcely breathe, and were unable to cross the river, but hid themselves in the rushes on the bank till night. But the anger, nay the fury of the Lord did not allow any of great name to escape.*

1250, October 1st.—Disturbances of the sea.

M. Paris, vol. v., pp. 175-77.

On the first of October, the moon, which was in its first quarter, rose swollen and ruddy in sign of a coming tempest, according to the words of the philosopher and versifier:

> Promittit de more rubens nova Cynthia ventos,
> Caumate vel Borea valido nisi præpediatur;
> Turgida dat nimbos, seu pallida clara serenum.†

So on that day in the first week of the waxing moon, the heaven was wrapped in a thick fog, and in violent commotion with a whirlwind, which tore away the branches, and the leaves, then dying on the trees, and carried them to a great distance. What was more destructive, the sea was disturbed and crossed its usual bounds, the tide flowing twice without any ebb, and emitted such a terrible roaring sound, that it re-echoed through distant parts of the land to the amazement of all who heard it, including old men, for no one in recent times remembered to have seen

* Cf. Joinville, ed. Wailly, pp. 101-159, and the Anglo-French Poem on William's death.

† Mr. Luard says he cannot ascertain the author of these verses.

the like before. In the darkness of night too the very sea seemed to burn as with fire, and the billows piled on billows to strive with such fury, that no skill on the part of the seamen could save their sinking ships, and many large and well built vessels were sunk and lost. Not to mention other places, at Hartbourne alone, three noble ships were swallowed up by the raging billows, besides small ones and others of moderate size. At the port of Winchelsea on the east coast, let alone salt houses, fishermen's cottages, bridges, and mills, more than three hundred houses in the town as well as some churches were thrown down by the violent rising of the sea. Holland in England, as well as Holland on the continent, together with Flanders and other flat places on the sea coast suffered irretrievable damage. The rivers falling into the sea were driven back so far that they rose and flooded the meadows, mills, bridges, and neighbouring houses, and invading the fields carried away the corn which had not been stored. So the anger of God plainly appeared to mortal men on the sea as well as on land, and the punishment of sinners appeared imminent according to the saying of Habakkuk: * "Art Thou angered in the rivers, O Lord, or is Thy wrath in the sea?" And what wonder, for from the court of Rome which should be held the fountain of all justice there flowed unmentionable enormities. †

* iii. 8.

† Then follows an account of how Innocent IV. presented the church of Westley to a Genoese, the rights of the prior of Binham and the indulgence that an Italian should not succeed an Italian (cf. above p. 109) notwithstanding.

1250, Dec. 13.—Earthquake.

M. Paris, vol. v., p. 187.

This year, on the morning of S. Lucy's day, there was an earthquake at S. Alban's and in the neighbouring district which is called the Chilterns, where no such thing had been known or heard of within the memory of man. For the land there is firm and chalky, with few hollows and little water, nor is it near the sea; so such an event, being unusual and unnatural, was the more to be wondered at. If this earthquake had been as destructive as it was unusual and remarkable, it would have thrown down all buildings. At the same time as the tremors of the earthquake there was, as it were, a terrible thunder underground. The following remarkable thing occurred during the earthquake: the pigeons, jackdaws, sparrows, and other birds, which were perched on the houses and on the trees, were seized with fright as though a hawk was hovering over them, and, suddenly spreading their wings, took flight as though mad, and flew backwards and forwards in confusion, exciting fear and dread in all who saw them. But after the rumbling and tremors of the earth had ceased they returned to their usual nests, which had been disturbed by the earthquake. This earthquake struck the hearts of all with horror, which I think is more than amazement or fear, and it was believed to be indicative of things to come. So in this year both land and sea were afflicted by unusual and dreadful commotions, which, according to the words of the Gospel, * "there shall

* S. Matt. xxiv. 7.

be earthquakes in divers places," threatened that the end of the world was at hand.

1251.—The king's economy.

M. Paris, vol. v., p. 198.

At Christmas the king, perhaps in anxiety and saving for his pilgrimage gave no presents to his knights or household, although all his predecessors had been accustomed to give royal garments and costly jewels.

The usual richness and hospitality of the royal table was also diminished, and his usual shame was set aside. He sought his lodgings and his meals with abbats, priors, clerks and men of low degree, staying with them and asking for gifts. He was no longer considered a courteous host who did not, besides showing the king and his household splendid hospitality, honour him, the queen, sir Edward and the several courtiers of dignity with noble and valuable presents: nay, the queen herself did not blush to ask for them, not as a favour but as her due. At this very time, not to delay the ears of those who hear with examples, the king when dining with Robert Passelewe, whom he had but lately foully abused in his chapel at Westminster, was treated with rich presents. Nor did the courtiers and royal household appreciate any gifts but rich and costly ones, as for instance desirable palfreys, gold and silver cups, necklaces with choice jewels, and imperial girdles and the like. So the king's court became like to that of Rome, sitting or rather prostituting itself like a harlot for gain.

APPENDIX.

ACCOUNTS OF THE AUTHORS CITED AND BOOKS QUOTED.

MATTHEW PARIS.

Matthew, called Parisiensis either because he was a native of Paris or had studied there, or because it was his family name (one not uncommon in the 13th century), was born about 1195. In 1217 he entered the Benedictine monastery of S. Alban's, where, on the death of Roger of Wendover, in 1236 he became chronicler. Though Matthew was a monk he was not a recluse, but took an active part in the life of the world, was a traveller, a politician, and a courtier, a man with a reputation which extended beyond his own country, as is proved by the mission with which he was entrusted by Louis IX. of France, who sent him in 1247 as the bearer of despatches to Hacon VI. king of Norway. In 1248 Matthew paid a second visit to Norway at king Hacon's request, and on the application of the Norwegian Benedictines to Innocent IV., in order to repair the financial disorder of the monastery of Holm. These two journeys were the chief events of his life, but we find him at court in 1247, when Henry III. bade him write a full account of the bringing of the Sacred Heart to Westminster. It is evident from his history that he had a wide circle of acquaintance among the chief men of all classes in the kingdom. He died at S. Alban's in the summer of 1259.

His chief work is the *Chronica Majora* (from which the extracts in this volume are taken), a history from the Creation to 1259. It is not, however, entirely his own work; indeed, the part covering the years 1235-59 is the only one for which he is responsible. Down to 1189 the *Chronica* is the work of John de Cella, abbat of S. Alban's from 1195-1215. Thence it was continued by Roger of Wendover on the same plan and from the same sources to 1235, the whole work up to this date long passing as his production and being known as the *Flores Historiarum*. This chronicle was transcribed by Matthew Paris, with numerous additions and corrections of his own. The *Historia Anglorum*, or *Historia Minor*, is chiefly an abridgment of the latter part of the *Chronica Majora*, extending from 1067 to 1253, but comprising additional information. Other works which have been ascribed to Matthew Paris are the *Duorum Offarum Merciorum Regum Vitæ*, which is certainly not his, the *Viginti trium Abbatum S. Albani Vitæ*, together with the *Additamenta* to his *Chronica Majora*, being chiefly a collection of explanatory documents. He states that he had written a *Life of S. Edmund*, but this is not known.

Matthew Paris has justly been considered the best Latin chronicler of the 13th century; and his work contrasts sharply with previous works of the kind. In place of an almost colourless narrative, we have a series of brilliant historical criticisms, a change which is mainly due to the altered policy of the clergy who were compelled to abandon their position of political neutrality for one of active partisanship. His style is constantly vivid and lively, and often marked by considerable humour. Such passages, for instance, may be observed as the account of Taillebourg and of Master Martin's mission to England, which bear every trace of being drawn from the accounts of eye-witnesses.

Matthew, like the majority of the clergy in his day, was a warm supporter of the popular cause. He fiercely denounces alike the encroachments and oppression of the Roman court and the extravagance and tyranny of the king and his foreign kinsfolk. In his pages, indeed, the national sentiment may be said first to receive adequate expression. The wide range of his history should be noticed, for not only is it the best source of information with respect to events in England, but it is also an authority of value for the history of France, of Spain, and of the struggle between the Papacy and the Empire.

S. Alban's, as lying close to London, was a great centre of intelligence; moreover, numbers of state documents were sent there to be preserved or copied. This alone would have made Matthew a valuable authority; but, as we have seen, he had also ample means of getting information as to events from the chief actors in them. With earl Richard of Cornwall we can easily see that he was intimate, and his authority is several times cited. In his later years Matthew came to know the king himself. And Henry was at S. Alban's in 1252 and again in 1257, on which latter occasion Matthew says he consorted with him *in mensa, in palatio, et in thalamo*, and obtained from him a list of English kings who had been canonised, which he gives in order that his illustrious informant should not have taken this trouble for nothing. Among others of Matthew's informants were bishop Richard de Witry of Chichester and bishop Richard of Bangor. He did not allow these intimacies to warp his judgment; earl Richard is freely criticised for his abandonment of the popular cause in 1239, and though personal knowledge softened the opinion which Matthew had at first formed of the king and archbishop Boniface (witness the alterations made by him in revising his work), much was still left that could not have been pleasing to the royal ears. If his feelings as a monk seem to

have made him judge Grosseteste harshly during his life, after his death he praises him warmly. While we recognise that Matthew had strong feelings on the politics of his day, we may accept his work as a just and fair history of his own times.

The *Chronica Majora*, from its denunciations of the papal court, was very popular at the Reformation. It was first published under the direction of archbishop Parker in 1571, and several editions appeared in the following century. The complete work has now been edited by the Rev. R. H. Luard in the Rolls Series, and the *Historia Anglorum* in the same series by Sir F. Madden. C. L. K.

ROBERT GROSSETESTE.

Grosseteste was born—it is at least a probable conjecture—in 1175, at Stradbrooke, in Suffolk. Little is known of his early life, save that he studied at Oxford. How long he remained there is doubtful. In 1224 he was appointed rector of the Franciscan scholars there, and Eccleston in his "Coming of the Friars" speaks enthusiastically of the influence he obtained over them. He was archdeacon successively of Wilts, Northampton, and Leicester, and was elected bishop of Lincoln by the chapter in 1235. He held the see till his death in 1253. For those eighteen years he was the foremost ecclesiastic in England, foremost in internal reformation of the church, foremost in resistance to Papal aggression, foremost in opposition to the king's attempts to tyrannise over clergy and laity. The life of Grosseteste indeed is so important a part of the history of his time that a short summary of its events cannot but be inadequate. The extracts given from his letters sufficiently illustrate his attitude toward the great question of the day; but we may observe:—(i.) That he carried out in his own diocese a thorough reform among the monastic and parochial clergy, acting always

with justice and true spiritual earnestness if sometimes with apparent harshness. He was greatly aided in his reform by the Friars minor, whose good work he took every opportunity of eulogising. His action was far from popular among the monastic clergy, as may be seen by the tone of Matthew Paris, who was in general sympathy with his aims, regarding him. He was involved for years in a quarrel with the chapter of his cathedral, on account of his claim to visit "not only the cathedral itself, but also the churches belonging to the prebends and those attached to the cathedral." The conclusion of the dispute was a victory for Grosseteste, but a victory won at the price of agreeing to collect, for a short time, from England for the papal needs. (ii.) We should notice also his political position, as the friend of Simon de Montfort, and tutor of his son, and as the hearty supporter of all attempts at political reform. It is possible, however, that had he lived to see the civil war his reverence for authority would have caused him to cast in his lot with the king. (iii.) But the most famous acts of his life are those of his opposition to papal provisions. From 1247 he waged a ceaseless war against the attempts of the popes to tax the English clergy on behalf of the private needs of the Roman see, and to provide for foreign ecclesiastics by conferring upon them English offices and benefices, of which, in many cases, the duties were beyond their powers or outside their intentions. In 1250 he delivered a speech before the papal court at Lyons in which he traced all the evils of the church to the corruption of the Curia and the greed and avarice of the Romans. But the needs of the papal exchequer were not satisfied by denunciations—the abuse continued to grow. "Such a point had it reached," says Matthew Paris, "that the bishop of Lincoln, being struck with amazement at it, caused his clerks carefully to reckon and estimate all the revenues of foreigners in England, and it was

discovered and found for truth, that the present pope, Innocent IV., had pauperised the whole church more than all his predecessors from the time of the primitive papacy. The revenue of the alien clerks, whom he had planted in England, and whom the Roman church had enriched, amounted to 70,000 marks. The king's revenue could not be reckoned at more than a third part of the sum." The culmination of the pope's endeavours is to be read in Grosseteste's answer to the request addressed to him to institute Frederic de Lavagna, the nephew of Innocent IV., to the next vacant prebend at Lincoln. The foreigner was a boy, not in holy orders, and had no intention of even visiting England. The reply of the bishop is the most famous assertion of English feeling against the Roman see which the history of the middle ages furnishes. The *Chronicle of Lanercost* relates that Innocent immediately excommunicated Grosseteste; more probably he was restrained from so impolitic an act. In 1252 Grosseteste addressed a letter to the nobles of England, the citizens of London, and the community of the whole realm, with a last protest against the tyrannies of the time. In 1253 he died, denouncing with his last breath the whole system on which the popes endeavoured to exercise their authority over England.

ADAM OF MARSH.

Adam of Marsh, or de Marisco, from whose letters extracts appear in this volume, was educated at Oxford, ordained priest, held a living near Wearmouth in the diocese of Durham, and was already famous when he took the Grey Friars' habit at Worcester during the wardenship of Agnellus (1236-1239). Throughout the life of that great prelate Grosseteste, Adam of Marsh enjoyed his friendship: under his patronage he lectured at Oxford and did much to found the great Franciscan School there. Eminent as a lecturer and in some sort the father

of the great English schoolmen, he was also well known at court and to the great leaders of the time. He was favoured by the king except when his plain speaking offended, was a familiar correspondent and adviser of the queen, and the trusted friend and counsellor of Simon de Montfort; all the while living as a rigid follower of the rule of S. Francis, "serving the wretched and the vile, and performing the prime and essential duties of a friar." Archbishop Boniface of Canterbury, whom he assisted by many wise counsels, with the aid of the king endeavoured to procure his appointment to the see of Ely in 1256, but the candidate elected by the monks, Hugh of Belesale, secured the pope's approbation. Adam died in 1257.

THE POLITICAL SONGS.

A striking feature of the period of Henry III.'s misgovernment and the Barons' War is the outburst of song on political and social evils. The volume edited by Mr. Wright for the Camden Society, 1839, contains fifteen versifications of the popular feeling. One is in English, jeering at Richard king of the Romans, whose action was considered as desertion of the popular party, and whose ridiculous position at the battle of Lewes is the theme of many a jest in the chroniclers of the time. Of the rest some are in Provençal, some in French, some in Latin, some half English, half French. Some were songs, no doubt, for the people, sung by the wandering minstrel who found welcome everywhere. But most are the composition of the clergy, mainly, in all probability, of the Grey Friars, scholars at Oxford, and show the vague popular discontent through the medium of the political intelligence of those, sons of the people themselves but trained ecclesiastics, who did so much to make the movement for reform a success. While the great earl and the nobler barons, with a few of the bishops, led the fight against papal and royal tyranny, and the historians of great monastic houses wrote the truths of the struggle for the eyes of the future, the friars and the lesser clergy gave a voice to the

popular feeling, and showed what it was that the people, clerk and lay, really needed, and how they regarded the great issues and the great men.

The *Song of Lewes*, the most important of these pieces of verse that has reached us, is a fine, vigorous rhyming Latin poem, possibly by a Franciscan clerk, giving the case of the reformers in the fullest and clearest form in which it has ever been presented. It is indeed one of the most valuable documents for the constitutional history of England during these times that has come down to us.

ROYAL LETTERS OF THE REIGN OF HENRY III.

A collection of the letters of royal and eminent persons from the *Close and Patent Rolls* of the reign of Henry III. was published in the Rolls Series in 1866, edited by the late Dr. Shirley, some time Regius Professor of Ecclesiastical History at Oxford. The second volume, from which several letters are inserted in this book, extends from about 1230 to the end of the reign. It contains much important matter relating to the foreign relations of the period as well as to the constitutional struggle.

TABLE I.

THE FAMILY OF HENRY III.

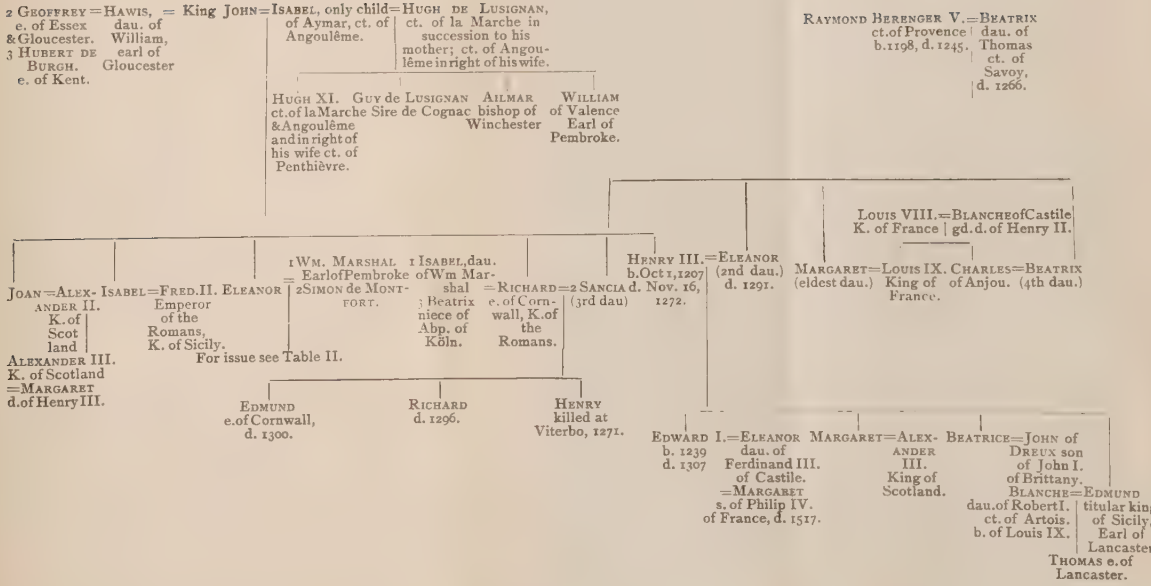
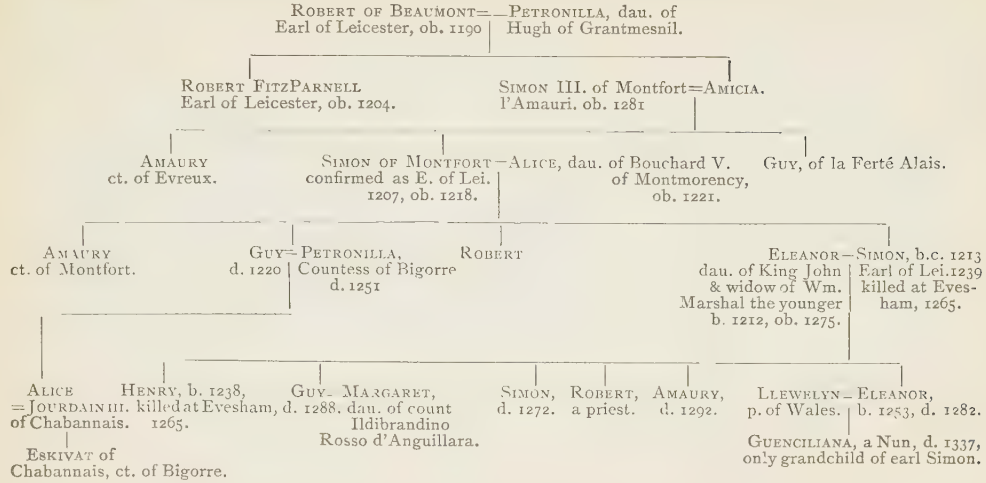

2 Geoffrey e. of Essex & Gloucester.
3 Hubert de Burgh. e. of Kent.
Hawis, dau. of William, earl of Gloucester
King John
Isabel, only child of Aymar, ct. of Angoulême.
Hugh de Lusignan, ct. of la Marche in succession to his mother; ct. of Angoulême in right of his wife.
Hugh XI. ct. of la Marche & Angoulême and in right of his wife ct. of Penthièvre.
Guy de Lusignan Sire de Cognac
Aimar bishop of Winchester
William of Valence Earl of Pembroke.
Raymond Berenger V. ct. of Provence b. 1198, d. 1245.
Beatrix dau. of Thomas ct. of Savoy, d. 1266.
Louis VIII. K. of France
Blanche of Castile gd. d. of Henry II.
Joan
Alexander II. K. of Scotland
Alexander III. K. of Scotland
Margaret d. of Henry III.
Isabel
Fred. II. Emperor of the Romans, K. of Sicily.
Eleanor
1 Wm. Marshal Earl of Pembroke
2 Simon de Montfort.
1 Isabel, dau. of Wm Marshal
3 Beatrix niece of Abp. of Köln.
Richard e. of Cornwall, K. of the Romans.
2 Sancia (3rd dau)
Henry III. b. Oct 1, 1207 d. Nov. 16, 1272.
Eleanor (2nd dau.) d. 1291.
Margaret (eldest dau.)
Louis IX. King of France.
Charles of Anjou.
Beatrix (4th dau.)
For issue see Table II.
Edmund e. of Cornwall, d. 1300.
Richard d. 1296.
Henry killed at Viterbo, 1271.
Edward I. b. 1239 d. 1307
Eleanor dau. of Ferdinand III. of Castile.
Margaret s. of Philip IV. of France, d. 1517.
Margaret
Alexander III. King of Scotland.
Beatrice
John of Dreux son of John I. of Brittany.
Blanche dau. of Robert I. ct. of Artois. b. of Louis IX.
Edmund titular king of Sicily, Earl of Lancaster.
Thomas e. of Lancaster.

TABLE II. THE HOUSE OF MONTFORT, EARLS OF LEICESTER.



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